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Bilingualism and Biculturalism  
Preliminary report 1965

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A Preliminary Report  
of the  
Royal Commission on Bilingualism  
and  
Biculturalism

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bilingualism and biculturalism  
Preliminary report 1965





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A preliminary report of  
the Royal Commission on Bilingualism  
and Biculturalism





# Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism



To His Excellency  
The Governor General in Council

We, the Commissioners appointed  
as a Royal Commission beg to submit  
to your Excellency the following  
Preliminary Report:

A. Davidson Dunton, Co-Chairman  
André Laurendeau, Co-Chairman  
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Royce Frith  
Jean-Louis Gagnon  
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Paul Wyczynski

Paul Lacoste, Co-Secretary  
N. M. Morrison, Co-Secretary

Ottawa, February 1, 1965.

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1965

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*Ten Canadians travelled through the country for months, met thousands of their fellow citizens, heard and read what they had to say. The ten do not now claim that they are relying on this as a scientific investigation, nor do they have solutions to propose at this stage. All they say is this: here is what we saw and heard, and here is the preliminary—but unanimous—conclusion we have drawn.*

*The members of the Commission feel the need to share with their fellow citizens the experience they have been through, and the lessons they have so far taken from it. This experience may be summarized very simply. The Commissioners, like all Canadians who read newspapers, fully expected to find themselves confronted by tensions and conflicts. They knew that there have been strains throughout the history of Confederation; and that difficulties can be expected in a country where cultures exist side by side. What the Commissioners have discovered little by little, however, is very different: they have been driven to the conclusion that Canada, without being fully conscious of the fact, is passing through the greatest crisis in its history.*

*The source of the crisis lies in the Province of Quebec; that fact could be established without an extensive inquiry. There are other secondary sources in the French-speaking minorities of the other provinces and in the “ethnic minorities”—although this does not mean in any way that to us such problems are in themselves secondary. But, although a provincial crisis at the outset, it has become a Canadian crisis, because of the size and strategic importance of Quebec, and because it has inevitably set off a series of chain reactions elsewhere.*

*What does the crisis spring from? Our inquiry is not far enough advanced to enable us to establish exactly its underlying causes and its extent. All we can do is describe it as we see it now: it would appear from what is happening that the state of affairs established in 1867, and never since seriously challenged, is now for the first time being rejected by the French Canadians of Quebec.*

*Who is right and who is wrong? We do not even ask ourselves that question; we simply record the existence of a crisis which we believe to be very serious. If it should persist and gather momentum it could destroy Canada. On the other hand, if it is overcome, it will have contributed to the rebirth of a richer and more dynamic Canada. But this will be possible only if we face the reality of the crisis and grapple with it in time.*

*That is why we believe it necessary to make this statement to Canadians.*

*We have to communicate an experience through which we have actually lived, and to show that simple realities of everyday life came to reveal the existence, the depth and the sharpness of the crisis.*

*Moreover, we are going to have to put our country's divisions on display, and we appreciate the dangers of doing so. But the feeling of the Commission is that at this point the danger of a clear and frank statement is less than the danger of silence; this type of disease cannot be cured by keeping it hidden indefinitely from the patient. Above all the Commissioners are convinced that they are demonstrating a supreme confidence in Canada; because to tell a people plainly, even bluntly, what you believe to be the truth, is to show your own conviction that it is strong enough to face the truth. It is in fact to say to the country that you have faith in it and in its future.*



Before coming to the idea of the "crisis" it is necessary to follow a long path—in effect to retrace the steps of the Commission. For the important thing is not to brandish the word "crisis", as so many Canadians have done, but to determine whether it accurately describes the present situation, and above all to grasp its true meaning, and to measure its full extent. This is what the Commission will try to do in the following pages.

The *first part* of the Preliminary Report is made up of a single chapter briefly summarizing the work of the Commission since its beginning. It leads to the experiment of the regional meetings, which is the pivot of this report.

In the *second part* of the report, we bring together the contrasting opinions we have heard at the regional meetings. To begin with, there is a short account of the first meetings; this is given in considerable detail because they were our first contact with public opinion, but above all because they aroused great interest within the Commission itself (Chapter 2). Mention will be found there of some of the themes which will be systematically explored in the following three chapters: the main concepts which Canadians hold of their country (Chapter 3); the way in which they normally react to the institutions of all kinds which make up the framework of their everyday life (Chapter 4); and finally, the different ways in which the people whom we heard related their political opinions to their many experiences (Chapter 5).

In spite of the great diversity of the material thus accumulated, a number of ideas emerge from these contrasts. In the *second part* of the report, the Commission simply arranges the ideas it heard; and it is the public which is speaking. In the *third part* of the report the Commission itself analyzes this material (Chapter 6) and begins to draw some preliminary conclusions (Chapter 7).

A short postscript outlines the future work of the Commission.

## The Evidence

This is not a treatise in social science we are submitting; it is an eyewitness report on the Canadian crisis.

Our main source of evidence has been the series of regional meetings. Our sources of information are more extensive than that, however, and we shall draw, in particular, on the following:

- (1) The private meetings arranged when we visited the provincial Premiers (these will be dealt with in Chapter 1);
- (2) Other sessions held privately with various groups, associations and representatives of institutions, particularly in Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto;
- (3) The interviews individual Commissioners had in every corner of the country and the conferences several of them attended as observers;
- (4) Letters to the Commission;
- (5) Finally, the newspapers, magazines, books and manuscripts both members and staff have been continually studying.

As we point out further on, the members of the Commission have been constantly exchanging and commenting on this information.

Thus, what we refer to here as "the evidence" consists in the main of the opinions expressed before us. Our preliminary conclusions are based on hundreds of hours of listening and thousands of oral and written submissions, none of which, taken separately, is of any conclusive value. Indeed, taken as a whole the evidence may seem contradictory, but it nevertheless gradually fell into place, revealing some very definite trends to those who heard and read it.

Inevitably of course there remains an element of personal choice in the selection of the numerous quotations to be found in these pages, in spite of all our precautions (see in particular Appendix II); but what appears represents the consensus of us all, and not the selection of one individual.

The Commission has relied, particularly in the second part, as much as possible on the actual words of the participants at the meetings. We will present their comments in two different ways: *a*) often we will employ actual quotations, transcribed from magnetic tape recordings; *b*) at other times we will use the reports of discussion group secretaries or the personal notes of the Commissioners, which are not always verbatim.\* For this reason, we have tried to distinguish between the two kinds of quotations. In the first case, we will use double quotation marks, (" . . . "), and in the second, single quotation marks (' . . . '). But in both cases, we are sure of their accuracy.

All of the Commissioners have collaborated in this report: some of it was written in English, some in French, even in the case of individual chapters, sections, and occasionally of paragraphs. There is thus no question of a text which was written in one language and translated into the other. The reader will find himself going, without difficulty we hope, from the original text to a translation, and vice versa, both in the English and in the French version. Because this has been a truly collective effort.

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\*In all cases where these quotations have been translated from French into English the original will be given in Appendix VI.











1. At the first meetings held on September 4 and 5, 1963, the members of the Commission had first to learn how to work together. That may seem obvious, but we think it a fact worth stating. Ten people who know one another slightly or not at all; whose origin, cultural background, experience and profession are different; who, moreover, live hundreds or even thousands of miles apart—even though they may have many common interests and a common mission—must first of all get to know each other. They must see where they stand with each other, they must explain their ways of approach, and, at an even simpler level, agree on the meanings they attribute to words.

The  
Commission  
meets

2. This is particularly true when they have received very general terms of reference to which more or less wide interpretations can justifiably be given. For instance, just what is the meaning of the terms “bilingualism” and “biculturalism”, used in the Commission’s name? How should one interpret the expression “equal partnership”? What are the framework and the limits of the inquiry to be? To what extent should the traditional subjects mentioned year in and year out in the press determine specific investigations, and what direction should those investigations take?

Terms of  
Reference

Any Canadian who has taken the time to study our terms of reference will have come up against the questions we faced at the start. He will realize how difficult they are to define precisely, and yet at the same time how alive they are, how they can reawaken historic memories, emotions and passions, even in those best prepared to analyze them.

Hence it was our determination to conduct our inquiry together as a group that led us to common conclusions.\*

3. In our opinion, the dominating idea in our terms of reference was “equal partnership between the two founding races”. This abstract concept begins to come alive only when it is applied to specific situations. But which situations? Our terms of reference would seem to take in every aspect of life in the Canadian community: in particular the public sector, economic and social life, education, cultural life and communications—not in their entirety, of course, but insofar as problems arising from the co-existence of two languages and two cultures are involved.

The  
questions  
raised by  
the terms of  
reference

Nor is that all. The Commission’s terms of reference also suggest that consideration should be given to “the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution”. This was a reminder that the mother tongue of fourteen per cent of the Canadian people is neither English nor French, and that millions of immigrants have implanted their various cultures in Canada. Here again the enriching features of such a diversity have to be looked into.

\*Cf. Appendix IV—Working Document, speeches by the Co-Chairmen.



Moreover, the Commission cannot forget that there is in Canada a native population, not large in number it is true, but which also has its traditions and its rights. According to the 1961 Census the Indians number over 200,000, the Eskimo about 12,000, approximately 1.2 per cent of the country's population. Their numbers are increasing rapidly. Though they are the oldest inhabitants—the early Eskimo and the even earlier Indian cultures have existed in Canada for thousands of years—they are less integrated in the life of the Canadian community than any other ethnic group. Their position and future prospects would have to be the object of special study.

We therefore had to establish from the very beginning a very large field of research.

The research  
program

4. We could not undertake this research ourselves, for we had neither the time nor the competence to do so. We therefore had to entrust it to experts, especially since these questions, although they are frequently brought up in certain parts of Canada, have seldom been studied in depth.

Is it true, for instance, that the French language is hardly ever used in the federal Civil Service? To what degree is it true that most of the senior positions are held by English-speaking Canadians? What are the reasons for this state of affairs? What changes would help to establish a fair measure of equality, and what exactly would constitute "a fair measure"?

Is it true that in a city like Montreal, where the majority of the population is French-speaking, business is carried on almost exclusively in English? Why? Assuming that this is true, is it inevitable?

To what extent is education being provided in French or English in areas where a French-speaking or English-speaking group is found? Is instruction adequate in the second language? Should the second language always be French or English, as the case may be? Could other languages be taught in public schools where, for instance, Canadians of German, Ukrainian, Italian, or Dutch descent constitute a large and compact group?

Is it true that all the English-speaking provinces have taken away the constitutional rights of French Canadians to their language and to their separate schools? Or is it only some provinces which have broken their commitments? Or may it be that the constitution did not in fact protect the rights which are claimed? What is the true picture?

Are our political institutions responsive to the needs and aspirations of all Canadians? Are they efficient or do they in themselves sometimes cause tensions and give rise to useless, even dangerous movements?

These questions are submitted simply by way of example, but a host of others could just as well be asked concerning the armed forces,

the voluntary agencies, Canada's image abroad, and so on. Given the number and importance of the problems, we needed a very large research program and that meant assembling a team of skilled researchers.

5. Most of the examples given in the previous paragraph refer to the situation of French-speaking Canadians. This may seem surprising since the Commission's terms of reference are based on the idea of equal partnership between the two major languages and cultures within the Canadian Confederation. But it must be recognized at the outset that the Commission was appointed, at least to some extent, for the purpose of studying the grievances which French Canadians, and particularly those in the Province of Quebec, have been expressing more and more vigorously. It is French Canada which, through its spokesmen, has been expressing dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs and insisting that it is the victim of inequalities which it finds unacceptable. For that reason we were led to study first those areas where grievances are already numerous and where the status quo is under examination. Any other approach would be unrealistic.

The French  
Canadians'  
grievances

All the same, it should be made quite clear that this approach is in no way meant to prejudge any conclusions we may arrive at when we have gained a more thorough knowledge of the facts.

6. Let us go a little further. The Commission's terms of reference mention the "steps to be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races . . ." This statement rests on a dual postulate, namely, the existence of a Canada united by a common political regime on the one hand, and the "equal partnership of the two founding races", on the other.

A dual  
postulate

The Quebec separatists dismiss the first postulate, since they question the very existence of the country.

As for "equal partnership between the two founding races", some people have argued that no mention is made of it either in our constitution or in our history. In their view, to accept the premise of equal partnership would be tantamount to reaching conclusions before the inquiry was begun. Indeed, it is true that what we are discussing here, the principle of equal partnership, is a question of basic orientation. It is one legitimate interpretation, among others, of our constitution and our history.

The Commission, of course, accepted the double postulate. But at the same time it let it be known that it would welcome the opinions of those who reject it: of those who look upon the country as essentially English, in spite of the French enclave in Quebec; and of those who, on the contrary, renounce the idea of one Canada, since they consider equal partnership unfeasible.

We shall have more to say later about the way in which these two opposing points of view match each other and spring from the same mentality. Claims for a dominant position for the English language on the one side lead the other to reject the concept of one Canada, to look on Canada as a foreign country, and to want separation. This is one of the essential components of the present crisis.

Equal  
partnership

7. But let us go back to the postulate of equal partnership as it appeared to us in the autumn of 1963. At that time the Commission wrote: "We emphasize that this is not the equality of citizens before the law in the usual sense: that equality is something which is written into our statute books and which cannot be tampered with. It is one of the foundations of law and of society.

"The principal object of our analysis is something else: it concerns the citizen as he participates in one or other of the two cultures: it is the equality of the English-speaking person and French-speaking person as such, whatever their ethnic origin may be."

And further on: "There is a difficult problem that will certainly confront us: we must ask ourselves how we can possibly reconcile the exigencies of cultural equality and parliamentary democracy in a country where the representatives of the two cultures are not equal in number."\*

The  
personnel  
of the  
Commission

8. Meanwhile practical matters required our attention, for we had to find accommodation, recruit a competent staff and organize the administration.

As our inquiry was to concern the two languages and the two cultures, should the entire staff be bilingual? This would have pleased us, as the staff would then have reflected the make-up of the Commission, whose members all understand both languages with the result that everyone can speak his own tongue and be understood by all. But we soon realized that we would have to set aside this requirement—it would have made recruitment too difficult or we would have had to engage mostly French Canadians or recent immigrants to the country. That was the first lesson reality was to teach us.

## The Preliminary Public Hearing

Opinions

9. On November 7 and 8, 1963, the Commission held a preliminary public hearing in Ottawa. Members of the public were invited to come and express their opinions on the meaning of the Commission's terms of reference and the way in which the Commission should proceed with the inquiry.

\*Cf. Appendix IV.



Five meetings were held in two days' time and the Commission heard the opinions of 76 associations and individuals from seven provinces of Canada who represented, semi-officially at least, a wide range of institutions and groups, provincial governments (Alberta and Saskatchewan), ethnic groups, the mass media, the Civil Service, universities, management and labour unions, political parties, artists, patriotic groups, etc.

Some of those who came expressed their views vigorously. Many suggested that the Commission should interpret its terms of reference in the broadest possible sense. Quite a number emphasized the unique nature of the inquiry, and about fifteen considered that the Commission's task was to inform the public as well as the government.

A warning

The impression we received, particularly from the English-speaking persons present, was that the public knew very little about the problem, and that it would not be wise to ask for statements of opinion which might prove oversimplified at this stage. It would be necessary, therefore, to encourage discussion from coast to coast, and to invite individuals and groups to express their present opinions spontaneously, in the rough, just as they occurred to them, without setting them down immediately in formal briefs.

10. While the suggestions we heard confirmed some of our own impressions, we hesitated for some time before deciding to give effect to them. It is certainly true, that a commission of inquiry, by its very existence, through the evidence it brings to light and in the way it focusses general attention on a controversial or unfamiliar topic, influences public opinion and tends to educate the general public with regard to the problem itself—but its main function and the reason for its appointment, is to investigate and not to educate. Thus there could be no question of anticipating our conclusions and preaching a doctrine in advance. On the other hand, if the Commission were to invite the Canadian people to express their opinions freely and in public, would it not be overwhelmed? Would it not give fanatics and eccentrics the chance to fill the air with nonsense which all the mass media of communication would then hasten to orchestrate? A risk was certainly involved.

To inquire:  
not to  
educate

11. It seemed to us, however, that the opposite risk, that we would reach our conclusions before a part of Canadian opinion had really grasped the problem, was more serious. At that time we were receiving warnings from various sources which went something like this: 'In our area not only are people astonished at the Commission's terms of reference but a large part of the population, including a considerable number of leaders who would normally take part in the drafting of briefs, cannot make head or tail of them.'<sup>1</sup>\* The danger was two-fold—

The most  
serious  
risk

\*The number indicates that this quotation, and others similarly numbered, have been translated. The quotations in their original form will be found in Appendix VI.

either some associations would refrain from expressing an opinion on a problem that seemed obscure, distant, even nonexistent to them, or they would express an opinion more or less haphazardly, without having been able to see the basic elements of the problem. In addition, the very nature of our inquiry implied active participation by as many citizens as possible. We had to get into direct touch with them ourselves, apart from the work of our researchers. In short, we concluded that an inquiry of this kind could not be conducted from an ivory tower in Ottawa.

A great  
dialogue

12. Insofar as possible we would have to be present at these first discussions between Canadians in all parts of the country, noting their spontaneous reactions to the formulation of the problem, and thus helping to establish a great dialogue from coast to coast. Would this be possible? We thought it would. Did our instructions allow us to do so? Such an undertaking was clearly justified, since the terms of reference authorize the Commissioners "to adopt such procedures and methods as they may from time to time deem expedient for the proper conduct of the inquiry . . ." Hence the regional meetings that we began to organize early in 1964.

The briefs

13. We had asked that briefs be submitted by February 1, 1964. As that date proved to be too early, it had to be extended to July 1st. This would have been necessary in any case, as numerous groups and individuals were already asking for more time, and experience proved that even on July 1st many of the briefs, particularly some of the more important ones, were far from ready.

### Visits to the Provincial Premiers

Necessary  
co-operation

14. We come to the month of January 1964. The Commission had finished its preliminary work and was starting on a new phase of its work. But while the regional meetings were being organized it had another task to perform.

The third paragraph of the Commission's terms of reference deals with education, which is under provincial jurisdiction. So it seemed necessary to meet the Premiers of the ten provinces and to ask them officially to co-operate with us. Most of them had already promised the Prime Minister of Canada, in principle, that they would do so.\* The Co-Chairmen accompanied by the two Secretaries, therefore, visited the ten provincial capitals. This tour, zigzagging back and forth across the country from capital to capital, and interrupted by other duties, lasted from the middle of January until the middle of March.

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\*Cf. Appendix III. Letters exchanged by Mr. Pearson and nine provincial Premiers.

The interviews were cordial and fruitful. The Premier was accompanied in every case by his Minister of Education and usually by a few of his colleagues. On three occasions a Premier had his entire cabinet with him, and another introduced several members of his Legislative Assembly to us.

Everywhere the Commission was promised complete co-operation on the particular phase of its work which concerns the provinces, namely the compilation of detailed information on language teaching and other aspects of education connected with our field of inquiry. Our staff can vouch for the co-operation which has since been forthcoming, and can foresee its future value.

15. These trips also enabled the Chairmen to talk to representatives of business, education, journalism, urban and rural organizations. Thus they came into contact with over 500 outstanding Canadians from many backgrounds, cultures, beliefs and occupations. In a way, despite the private character of these meetings, it was like a dress rehearsal for the regional meetings.

First contacts

16. The topics of discussion began to emerge almost automatically. It was then that people in English-speaking Canada began to ask the questions we have heard time and again since. For example:

English-speaking  
Canada

—‘Why do you want to make us speak French here in X . . . ?’

—‘What do you want us to do? Around here we all get along well together. There are no problems here.’

—‘What does Quebec want?’

To the first question (‘Why make us speak French?’), the Chairmen answered that nothing was further from their thoughts, that the Commission had never imagined that the idea was to make all Canadians become bilingual. On the contrary, the Commission is convinced, and has been saying since October 1963 that in all probability large parts of Canada, both French-speaking and English-speaking, would remain unilingual. ‘In that case,’ another person would ask, ‘what is the point of your inquiry?’ The Chairmen would reiterate that in the view of the Commission it is a matter of seeing how the co-existence of two communities, one French and the other English-speaking, can best be worked out within a single country. We often felt that this reply seemed unreal and remote to many people.

For each person, naturally, was thinking of a provincial or regional aspect of the problem; ‘no problem here’ meant—if we have correctly interpreted many reactions—‘We have reached a certain kind of balance among the various cultures here. Biculturalism might destroy that balance which was often difficult to achieve.’ In the Prairie Provinces and in British Columbia in particular, people talked of a multiplicity



of cultures, of how each culture wanted to stay alive, and of the danger of balkanization such tendencies might create in Canada. As the conversations progressed, however, it became obvious that hardly anywhere were the problems entirely solved, even locally, and that it was useful to bring them up for discussion.

As for the last question ('What does Quebec want?'), it is such a central question that it would be pointless to dwell on it at this preliminary stage.

The "other"  
ethnic groups

17. Canadians who are neither of British or of French origin, and thus belong to what are usually referred to as the "other ethnic groups", in many cases shared these views. Others, however, again on the Prairies, repeatedly advanced one specific point: 'If two groups are privileged,' they pointed out, 'that makes all the others, and that means us, second-class citizens.' Some were even afraid they might be witnessing a manoeuvre intended to take away rights they already had; the Chairmen noted the sometimes dramatic nature of this fear. They would then reiterate the policy the Commission had already adopted with regard to the "other" cultures, which we described above. Nevertheless, we were to hear these comments echoed many a time at the regional meetings.

French-  
speaking  
Canada

18. Our first contacts with French-speaking Canada did not reveal anything we had not anticipated, unless it was the extreme suspicion with which a large part of Quebec looks on anything that is initiated by Ottawa, and its considerable scepticism as to English Canada's ability and desire to understand French Canada. Some said irritably: 'We have been submitting our claims for thirty, fifty and even a hundred years, and there have never been any results—why should we begin again now?'<sup>2</sup> The divergent preoccupations of French Quebec and the "French minorities" of the other provinces were very evident. French-speaking Quebecers spoke insistently of their own future—they were not particularly concerned about that of the French minorities. The representatives of those minorities often appeared to be badly informed about what is happening today in Quebec, to such an extent that they are poor interpreters to their English-speaking fellow citizens of what is going on in that province. In short, regional differences seemed, during this first sampling of opinion, to be almost as marked in French Canada as they were in English Canada, despite the fundamental unity of each of the two communities where language and culture are concerned.

The disturbing  
seriousness  
of the  
situation

It would have been unwise to draw hasty conclusions from these rapid and relatively few contacts. They nevertheless enabled us to assess more accurately the disturbing seriousness of the situation.

At this stage the regional meetings began.

## The Regional Meetings

Twenty-three regional meetings were held across Canada, from Victoria to St. John's, Nfld. In this way we met over 3,600 individuals at sessions held during the day, and approximately 8,200 at the evening sessions.\*

19. The Commission does not pretend that these public discussions were a series of scientifically conducted tests of opinion from which they can draw firm and accurate conclusions. In the first place, despite our best efforts, the various social and ethnic groups were not equally represented. Journalists, and people of Ukrainian origin, for instance, were relatively more numerous at the regional meetings; whereas few farmers, or Canadians of German descent, attended. In addition, the composition of the audience varied considerably from one meeting to another. Finally, the choice of twenty-three centres, justified though it may have been, was somewhat arbitrary.

The  
participants

We nevertheless feel entitled to attach a great deal of importance to the opinions expressed before us. The very fact that journalists and certain kinds of intellectual and community leaders were particularly numerous at the daytime meetings leads us to believe that we heard a wide range of opinions of those people who, because of their duties or their positions, can speak with weight and ability on a number of matters that fall within the Commission's terms of reference.

20. It should also be noted that the generally courteous and serious atmosphere in which the discussions took place encouraged freedom of expression. There were very few verbal outbursts. On the whole we heard frank, direct and vigorous opinions expressed at times calmly, at others heatedly, but nearly always in a well-mannered way. Particularly in the small group meetings people felt free to express their opinions as frankly and strongly as they considered appropriate. Moreover, the spirited discussions that took place at these meetings discouraged participants from speaking flippantly and led them to emphasize points they thought essential to an understanding of the situation. It was a kind of atmosphere that favoured the emergence of reasoned arguments and firm judgments—the most meaningful, perhaps, for anyone who is trying to understand the situation in the country. There were distorting factors of course, particularly during the evening plenary meetings. Some people who were more used to public speaking than others may occasionally have exerted a disproportionate influence on the direction and character of the discussions. At Chicoutimi and Quebec groups of separatists used the meetings as a platform to spread their propaganda.

A favourable  
climate

\*Cf. Appendix II for a detailed description of the organization and operation of the meetings as well as for other particulars.

The unique  
quality of  
the  
experience

But we were fully aware of these distortions, and in each case we attempted to give them their proper place in a general perspective.

21. We believe that this whole experience was unique, in the first place because of the actual technique of the meetings, described in the Appendices;\* and in the second place because the public, contrary to expectation, did not come to listen to speeches but rather to tell us what they thought. To a great extent the people present directed the debate to questions they considered particularly important, and the discussions took place among the participants themselves. At the beginning of each meeting one of the joint Chairmen would state that the Commission was not there to deliver a message but to *keep silent and listen*, since it was patiently trying to "learn" about Canada. The Chairman usually then suggested three questions which sum up the key problem as the Commission sees it:

*Can English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians live together, and do they want to?*

*Under what new conditions?*

*And are they prepared to accept those conditions?*

The Chairman would also mention the presence of other cultures in Canada and emphasize that the Commission should and would take them into account.

The unique character of the experience lies precisely in the fact that when these points had been established it was up to the public to open up the subject with the help of the group leaders, and to start discussion on concrete issues.

A fruitful  
kind of  
tension

22. The value of the regional meetings, indeed, lay in this continual confrontation of the Commissioners with the various gatherings. The members of the Commission said very little, they asked few questions, but nevertheless they were there and everyone knew it. Their very presence caused the problem to be present, so much so that on several occasions, particularly in those parts of the country where one of the cultures has very little day-to-day contact with the other, some people believed that it was the Commission that was artificially creating the problem, which seemed unreal to them. However, there was nearly always someone who had read or travelled more than his fellow citizens who would emphasize the gravity of the situation and the dangers facing Canada. The result was what we might describe as a fruitful kind of tension stimulating people to speak out frankly.

Often, indeed, participants felt impelled to join the discussion to tell of their own experience or that of someone close to them.

The origin, training, profession, place of residence, as well as the temperament and ideas of the participants were remarkably diverse.

\*Cf. Appendix II.



'How do you manage to sort things out?'<sup>3</sup>, observers would sometimes ask. It was not always easy. However, as the meetings proceeded, certain categories began to form in our minds and it was possible to begin the work of classification.

Forty hours or so spent in a given district certainly are not enough to acquire a thorough knowledge of it, even with the most reliable of informants. But when attention is focussed on a specific point, on the vital question of relations between the two cultures and two languages, the mind is concentrated and works more intensely. Commissioners constantly checked their impressions with their colleagues, and in this way were made aware of feelings, emotions, and ways of thinking that normally they would have missed. Besides, informal talks took place before and after the public sessions and provided the Commissioners with further insights which often helped them to understand better what had taken place at the meetings.

23. The technique used also had another advantage. The Commissioners travelled rapidly from one point to another, following an itinerary that led each one to see something of almost every province. When it came to a choice the rule was, as far as possible, to send a member of the Commission to areas with which he was the least familiar. Thus, quite often, each one found himself catapulted into surroundings that were new to him.

The result was that our interest was being constantly reawakened. Conflicting impressions were created by our rapid moves from one place to another: Sherbrooke was followed by London, Three Rivers by Sudbury, Moncton by Chicoutimi, Chicoutimi by Winnipeg, and Vancouver by Windsor. Commissioners sitting in Calgary could exchange their impressions on the telephone with others sitting in St. John's, Nfld. They were struck by unexpected similarities, sharp differences, even changes in the psychological climate. They often felt they were being rushed; at times they would have liked to catch their breath between two onslaughts. But the established itinerary had to be followed and they had to carry along, in spite of themselves, almost against their will, vivid impressions they had gleaned elsewhere. Thus a Quebecer in Vancouver, a Westerner in the Maritimes, an English-speaking Commissioner in Quebec had to face audiences he was unprepared for, bringing him hard up against a reality he had so far only learned about in books. The feeling, at times, was as if one held this exceptionally vast country in the palm of one's hand.

Moreover, when a Canadian of British origin was passionately defending unilingualism, when someone was putting the case for cultural diversity, or when someone had the floor arguing separatism, one of the Commissioners could say to his colleagues, 'that is what

The shock  
value of the  
experience

I was telling you about, and perhaps you did not realize how strong the feeling is.'

All this, of course, leads to assumptions and judgments worth only what the person expressing them is worth. The members of the Commission do not pretend to be infallible. They wish to emphasize the fact that the conditions under which they were able to work were truly unique, so much so that they feel justified in drawing some preliminary conclusions from their many-sided experience.











24. The first four regional meetings were held in Quebec and in Ontario. One team of Commissioners went from Three Rivers to Sudbury, and the other from Sherbrooke to London. Right away, striking contrasts between French-speaking Quebec and English-speaking Canada began to appear.

Introduction

Broadly speaking, Three Rivers and Sherbrooke\* are predominantly French Canadian centres; Sudbury is in the heart of a mixed community (with a large French Canadian minority and many other ethnic groups); and London is almost exclusively English-speaking.

At the two meetings in the Province of Quebec, young people were much in evidence, and were rather aggressive. The best attended evening meeting was in Sudbury, where the audience took a lively interest in the proceedings and expressed itself quite bluntly. London was much more calm and friendly.

In Sudbury, attention was largely focussed on educational problems. Here, and wherever French minorities exist, the problem of the two cultures is primarily thought about, felt and experienced in terms of the school question.

In Sudbury

In addition, a significant representation of other ethnic groups gave an added dimension to the discussions. It was pointed out that there were many ethnic groups in the area. One participant went so far as to state that, "All are trying to retain [their] own culture," and that therefore Sudbury sets an excellent example for others to follow. Others expressed the fear of being crushed between the British and the French. On several occasions the expression "third force" was used to emphasize that these otherwise dissimilar groups have in common the characteristic of being neither British nor French. These were points of view we were to find again elsewhere, especially on the Prairies.\*\*

25. What struck us most at the time, however, was the comparison between Sherbrooke and Three Rivers on the one hand, and London on the other.

\*We say Three Rivers or Sherbrooke here, as we will later say Vancouver and Quebec, only for the sake of brevity, and without any claim that they express the views of the extremely complex communities which these words represent. We would point out once and for all that whenever such terms are used, they should be understood to mean, depending on the context, the opinions heard in Three Rivers, Sherbrooke, or other specified cities.

\*\*Beginning with Sudbury, we came also in contact with Canadians of Indian origin. During the course of that meeting and in others that followed, there was brought to our attention a question which is obviously urgent today: the place of the Indian and Eskimo within the Canadian Confederation. The former, divided into 526 bands, under the administration of a Branch of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, live for the most part on 2,239 reserves (about six million acres) while the latter are under the administrative control of the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources with the exception of the 815 Eskimos in Newfoundland. As to the problem raised by their integration into Canadian life, with relation to the conflict which causes opposition between the "two founding races", not all of them would react in the same way.

Here is how the Indian population is broken down: Prince Edward Island, 348; New Brunswick, 3,746; Nova Scotia, 3,397; Quebec, 21,970; Ontario, 44,765; Manitoba, 25,681; Saskatchewan, 25,334; Alberta, 20,931; British Columbia, 38,616; Yukon, 2,006; Northwest Territories, 4,915. Two-thirds of the Eskimos, exactly 7,977 live in the Northwest Territories. The Census counted 2,567 in Quebec, 815 in Newfoundland and 40 in the Yukon. It must be remembered that in the whole world there are only about 60,000 Eskimos; 30,000 in Greenland, nearly 17,000 in Alaska, 1,500 in the USSR and 11,835 in Canada.

In Sherbrooke  
and  
Three Rivers

In both Quebec centres, the dissatisfaction of French Canadians found wide expression, sometimes in moderate tones and along the traditional lines of French Canadian nationalism, sometimes with a passion and even a violence hard to dismiss as purely verbal, particularly where young people were involved. The relative positions of the French and English languages were described as scandalous in areas where French Canadians are so predominant (95 per cent in Three Rivers, 88 per cent in Sherbrooke). 'You have to know English to earn a living . . . English is spoken so much around Sherbrooke, a French Canadian has trouble getting ahead if he doesn't know English.'<sup>4</sup> And yet we were told there are very few contacts between the two groups, each of which looks down on the other. For example, according to one participant, students at the University of Sherbrooke seldom mix with students at Bishop's University; furthermore, Bishop's students "do not want to learn French."<sup>5</sup> (Sherbrooke). "English Canadians," we were told, "make no effort to learn French: some of them have lived in Three Rivers for fifty years and still don't know a word of French. They think themselves culturally superior; they own 75 per cent of the local capital. The English-speaking bosses don't encourage French Canadians to rise to managerial positions—not through ill-will mind you, but because they forget the very existence of the French Canadians, in spite of their overwhelming numbers in the area."<sup>6</sup> (Three Rivers). In other words, these French Canadians in Three Rivers and Sherbrooke would think it perfectly logical, as some of them said, to have to speak English in communities where they formed a minority of 5 per cent or even 12 per cent of the population; but the same people find it an intolerable imposition, where 95 per cent or 88 per cent of the whole population is French-speaking, that someone who wants to better himself must speak English. Some of them tell themselves that it is due to the superior economic position of their English-speaking fellow citizens, not just locally, but in the province and in the country as a whole. 'The whole system is English,' some say, 'that's why the English-speaking feel no need to learn French; they're camping here like some imperial army in a colony.'<sup>7</sup>

The  
"inequalities"

Thus the "inequalities" they complain about, in the country as a whole, and in politics as well as in business, are seen through the prism of the local "inequalities" they experience and of which they are deeply conscious. The more remote, country-wide "inequalities" thus become more immediate, more real, and give rise to highly emotional reactions. For instance, to quote an example related to the Civil Service, a trade union leader told us of a trip he took as a member of a labour delegation to a non-French, non-English country: our hosts 'knew they were welcoming French Canadians. They saw to it that wherever we went,

we were greeted by someone who spoke French. And so, throughout the country, we could get along in French—everywhere, that is, except at the Canadian Embassy.<sup>78</sup> The problem of the French-speaking minorities in the other provinces worried some—but only some—of the audience. ‘Why are they so badly treated,’ it was asked, ‘when we are so generous to our English-speaking minority, generous to the point of letting ourselves be anglicized?’<sup>79</sup> Statements of this kind led a number of people to conclude that these French-speaking minorities are doomed because of the attitude of the English Canadians, and that the French Canadians should therefore devote all their efforts to the development of a unilingual Quebec.

How can this state of affairs be changed, and how, particularly, can a way be found to end the inferior status of French in Quebec? Most young people felt that the whole system should be abolished, once and for all, and that the province should separate from the rest of Canada. Others wanted Quebec to be given broader powers, and demanded a new constitution, or major amendments to the present constitution. There were suggestions that Quebec should become unilingual, or at least that French be given priority in the province. It was extremely difficult to isolate the various problems—political, economic and social—which were regarded as forming a global entity. These people live in a situation that is highly unsatisfactory to them and damaging to their pride; these people want sweeping reforms, and are very impatient.

26. The atmosphere in London was quite different. Since it was after all a meeting of the Commission, the subjects that came up for discussion were much the same, but they came up in a different order. There were some calls for constitutional amendments. Half the speakers put the blame squarely on the people of Quebec themselves for their “inferior status”, while the other half felt that both sides were at fault. It was widely accepted that there is a “national crisis”, or at least a crisis which, from having been limited first to Quebec, now concerns all of Canada because it threatens the very future of the country. On the whole, the audience was friendly, and more than usually well-informed and well-educated.

In  
London

However, while people talked to us again and again in Sherbrooke and Three Rivers about secession and fundamental reform, the subject that evoked the most spontaneous reaction in London was the teaching of languages. Should English-speaking Canadians learn French, or not? If so, how? It is not easy, some people remarked, in an area where only 1 per cent of the people are French-speaking (though this percentage is not much less than that of the English population in Three Rivers). Anyway why should Quebec turn up its nose at English, which is now a universal language? That’s not the point, back would come



A barrier  
between the  
cultures

At the  
outset,  
two different  
attitudes

the retort, it is a good thing to learn two languages, and not just for practical reasons. But does a community like London have enough French teachers? And so forth.

We report these remarks without any intention of sounding ironical. They are, in the main, perfectly serious questions which may be legitimately raised. What strikes us here is not that the people of London and those of Three Rivers and Sherbrooke disagreed with each other, but rather that they were not talking about the same things. Responses were given in London to questions never brought up in Three Rivers and Sherbrooke. The concessions offered in the English-speaking community were seldom those demanded in the French-speaking communities. Their clocks were set at a different time.

This very point, indeed, was made quite forcefully at the time by a few speakers who showed an insight and thoughtfulness that was remarkable in its accuracy and breadth. In general, however, their message was not understood, or its full meaning was partly lost. Thus we began to sense the existence of an actual barrier between the cultures, a barrier that is extremely difficult to cross, and is not merely a result of ignorance or gross errors of fact. However, it is as subtle as it is real, and can hardly be appreciated by anyone who has not experienced it personally.

27. These first meetings enabled us to capture the spirit in which the two language communities approach the problem.

In French Canada, and especially in Quebec, little attention was given to our terms of reference. The people we met had been living with the problem; they had no wish to study it further, as they felt sure that they understood it all too well. They proceeded to make assertions, using terms which they rarely bothered to define, but they displayed a keen awareness of the urgency of the problem. Impatience was the order of the day.\*

In contrast, English-speaking Canadians, especially those not of British stock, regarded the problem as a relatively new one, to such an extent that they often felt they had to define it, to make sure they had clearly in their mind what they were talking about. Their very definitions of the problem centered around something they already know, such

\*After a discussion group in Quebec, a very young separatist handed one of the Commission members a copy of an old magazine. 'Read this,' he said. 'I found it in my grandfather's library—yes, my grandfather's', he added with a sardonic smile. 'Everything the federalists are saying today is already in there, and hasn't meant a thing.' This was a copy of a Montreal magazine, *l'Action française*, which had published a series of articles on bilingualism in 1925. The young separatist pointed out some passages that were underlined in an article on bilingualism in the federal sphere—the legal aspect, appearing in February 1925: "English is spoken by the majority of Canadians, French by the minority. Thus it is the latter that must constantly try to justify its existence."

—'Constantly, you're not joking,' said our questioner: 'that has gone on for at least forty years! Read this too' he continued pointing to another passage according to which French, despite the conquest "is not an intruder and belongs just as much as English in Canada."

Young people surrounded us by this time and it was for their benefit that the separatist read a last quotation: some Anglo-Canadians "seem disposed to give a broad interpretation to the law of 1867, and to recognize that Confederation formed an Anglo-French country." 'In 1925!' exclaimed the young man. And his friends laughed.

as the teaching of a second language. They patiently analyzed such factors, which are rarely the most significant, and this gave an impression of good will and serious interest, but also, in the long run, a certain feeling of futility.

The two attitudes are easy to explain historically; a minority culture is accustomed to protecting itself and is always conscious of its demands. This does not alter the fact that there are many real points of friction between French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians. The former are likely to feel that the seeming incomprehension of their opposite numbers is rather too convenient to be believed; the latter too feel they are being presented with an over-simplified picture, born of emotion rather than of honest thought. So the dialogue gets off to a bad start.

28. It would be tedious to describe in detail each of our regional meetings. The rest of this report therefore will concern itself with general themes, several of which were already becoming clear to us, and with the contrasting reactions these themes provoked across the country.

Emergence  
of general  
themes

This is a delicate undertaking, because everywhere discussions had their own particular flavour. Thus it will be impossible to do justice to each meeting and to recapture and communicate the richness and feeling discovered in each centre. It is hard to portray the tremendous diversity the Commission encountered and to record all the conflicting images and contradictory opinions which emerged. However, it must be attempted.

We will report the words of the participants just as they were spoken to us (except for corrections in grammar when necessary). Many judgments or opinions we heard were obviously based on a mistaken or partial view of the reality of the situation. The Commission has moreover set up research to look into many of the questions raised by the participants. But our main intention in this report is to bring out the contrasts in opinions, and only in a few exceptional cases have we thought fit to point out certain errors. Where a misconception itself forms an essential part of a judgment, it will hereafter be considered an integral part of the speaker's vision of his country, or of the particular situation which he describes.

Use of  
quotations

On particular points, however, where it is possible to do so without breaking the flow of the narrative, we have inserted official statistics, established information or short remarks, in order to underline the disparity between certain basic Canadian realities and the ways in which various participants described them.

Some particularly delicate and complex subjects were also brought up. We thought it reasonable to go into them, and while reserving judgment on them for the moment, to indicate briefly their importance to an understanding of the Canadian situation.







29. It soon became apparent, as might have been expected, that conflicts in opinion were rooted in widely differing conceptions of the Canadian state and society. The image of his country that each Canadian had forged for himself inevitably determined his assessment of the present predicament and formed the background and basis of his participation in the discussions. At once striking contrasts emerged between French and English-speaking Canadians, and even more between French-speaking Quebec and the rest of Canada, as each tried to relate the implications of the co-existence of two cultures to the Canada he recognized.

### A) Concepts of Dualism

30. French-speaking Canadians for the most part accepted without discussion the broad basic idea of "equal partnership" expressed in the Commission's terms of reference; they proceeded immediately to examine specific problem areas such as education, industry and the public sector. It must be noted, however, that some Quebec separatists and quasi-separatists\* derided the whole idea of equal partnership, not so much because they opposed it in principle, as because they felt sure it was unattainable or that English-speaking Canadians would never allow it to be implemented; thus, from their viewpoint, since equality can never be fully realized, Quebec must separate, or at least obtain the largest possible measure of autonomy.

"Equal  
partnership"

Similarly among English-speaking participants there were a number who at the outset vigorously denied the relevance for Canada of the equal partnership principle. However, many others viewed the idea sympathetically; but even among these, few appeared to understand all the implications of the concept.

Here then was one major contrast: with the exception of the separatists and the quasi-separatists, who consider the goal of equal partnership to be utopian, the French-speaking Canadians we met, when confronted with the idea, said: 'It's a good idea. But it has not yet been implemented in this or that field and in the future it must be.' Whereas English-speaking Canadians, except for the most negative group, would say: 'But what is meant by equal partnership? Where does the idea come from? What historical and constitutional foundation does it have?'

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\*By the term quasi-separatism we are trying to describe in an approximate way not an organized social movement but a state of mind which often manifested itself in the regional meetings held in the Province of Quebec. Nobody claimed to belong to this group, and we are creating this classification somewhat arbitrarily. By quasi-separatism we mean a state of mind peculiar to those who, although they have not chosen separatism, could probably do so under certain circumstances—and this without causing them any great feeling of disruption—since they were already defining their position almost exclusively from a Quebec point of view. For a more detailed study of their position see Chapter VI.



The two  
founding  
groups and  
the compact  
theory

31. Among French-speaking Canadians, the expression "two founding peoples" was quite frequently used. "Our rights and privileges in the Canadian Federation are not completely honoured, and we feel our group should have priority precisely because it is one of the founding races," stated a Franco-Ontarian in Windsor.

Typically enough, he was linking the concept of founding peoples to the idea of a contract between them, which established French Canada's rights at the time of Confederation. In the past, two major versions of the compact theory have been elaborated: a compact among provinces and a treaty between "races". Quebec's rights (and those of the other provinces) have been based on the first version; the rights of French Canadians throughout Canada on the second. We encountered protagonists for both ideas, and in each case resentment was strong. As another man at Windsor put it: "The grievance here is that the Canadian of French descent, according to the Confederation of 1867, is not getting the privileges he was granted."

Speakers rarely attempted to justify this sense of indignation by precise references to the text of the BNA Act. More often, the concept of a compact was simply advanced as a basic assumption of Canadian federalism. A concrete example of what respect for the treaty-between-races version of the contract idea entailed was often given, however: this was the treatment which the French-speaking majority in Quebec accorded to its English-speaking minority. As a man in Rimouski put it: "For its part Quebec would like to see the French minorities of the other provinces given the same treatment it accords its own English minority."<sup>10</sup>

French Canadian speakers from the Maritimes, Ontario and the West accepted this test, and in doing so they implied that their English-speaking compatriots had broken a solemn undertaking.

Rejections

32. Many English-speaking participants, however, rejected the concept of two founding races. In Calgary, for example, we heard one man say: "Our Canada is no longer made of two founding races, or should I say floundering races, but through immigration is made up of numerous races, and our real problem is to blend them into one Canada, not two or more."

The BNA Act was often presented as "not a union of two nations but of four provinces, one of which happened to be French" (Moncton), or "an arrangement made nearly a hundred years ago whereby a certain territory in [this] new Canada was set aside where the French influence was to be on a parity" (Calgary). A citizen in Regina pointed out that the text of the BNA Act referred only to religious rights and to the distribution of powers between the federal and provincial levels of government, and he argued that the Act had no significance as a compact between two founding groups. A separatist in Quebec City

also refused to recognize any evidence in the BNA Act of a special arrangement between the two peoples. He declared that, "The facts and the text of article 133 of the Constitution completely establish that it is absolutely not so and that Quebec is the only province where French is the official language."<sup>11\*</sup>

A lawyer from Calgary, in a letter to the Commission, expressed this whole point of view in very precise terms: "As to the matter of constitutional law, the Canadian Confederation is not based on an equal partnership of the two founding races. That idea originates in the so-called compact theory of Confederation which is neither historically nor legally correct. Confederation is based on the British North America Act, court decisions and various conventions which prescribe the relationship of the various provinces the one to the other and to the federal government. Partnership of races, much less equal partnership, is an unknown concept . . ."

Not only was Canadian history frequently not interpreted in the same way by French-speaking and English-speaking participants, it was sometimes relegated to a secondary importance by the latter: "Canada's future is a lot more important than her past, so let's all work together to create a Canadianism in Canada." (Victoria). As one might expect, this was a view more often expressed in the younger provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan; yet these sentiments found a kind of echo on occasion from Quebec separatists who attached no importance to the idea of two founding groups, but who were very much interested in the future—a future in which Quebec would be separate from the rest of Canada.

33. These notions and expressions—"equal partnership", "two founding groups", "a compact"—are traditional in French Canada. "Two nations" is a more recent and vivid way of expressing this desire for a recognition of the dual character of the country. French Canadians, who used to refer to themselves as "a race", or "a nationality", now more and more speak of themselves as "a nation". "How do you propose," asked one man in Sherbrooke, "with some scheme of bilingualism, to establish good will and understanding in Canada, unless you accept the existence of a French Canadian nation at the outset?"<sup>12</sup> This idea of a French Canadian nation, having a common language, territory, history and a common culture or way of life, was expressed in Quebec by many people who have no association with separatism. In their mind, it provides the foundation for the ideal of a partnership on equal terms. And when these Quebec French Canadians think of themselves as one nation, it is easy—if not logical—for them to lump all the others together as a nation. Thus concentrating on themselves,

"Two  
nations"

\*Article 133 guarantees the use of the English and French languages in the laws, legislature and the courts of Quebec and in the Federal Parliament and courts.

and on what we may call their own self-conquest, they view the rest of Canada as a single entity—'les Anglais'—the non-self. The expression "two nations" still rings in our ears, it was so often heard in our Quebec meetings.

The  
identity  
of  
English-  
speaking  
Canada

The matter looked very different to most English-speaking Canadians that we met. They might concede that there are uses of the word "nation" which are suited to the French Canadians in Quebec, but the same term, they felt, could not so easily be applied to all the non-French inhabitants of Canada taken as a whole. The non-French people are united only by their common citizenship in Canada, the bond that also links them with the Canadians living in Quebec. One man in Halifax did suggest that the powerful sense of cultural identity which French Canadians express by the word "nation" might develop in English-speaking Canada in the future. He hoped that, "If we have time, we in English Canada can perhaps define what our identity is and then, knowing that, perhaps we can work with those in Canada who already know what their cultural identity is." But most Canadians whose background was not French seemed to equate the word "nation" with Canada, and they thought of the country as a single nation-state.

A  
question  
of  
semantics?

Is this difference in the meaning assigned to the word "nation" merely a matter of semantics? Perhaps the French phrase "one country, two nations" may seem to mean almost the same as the English phrase "one nation, two cultures" or even "one nation, two languages". Yet one senses that this last expression in particular signifies much less. A discussion leader in Newfoundland put it this way: "The crux of the whole issue is that we have people looking on themselves as French Canadians, when they should be looking on themselves as Canadians who speak French."

Indeed it seemed that French-speaking participants used the term "nation" to emphasize their understanding of a bi-national Canada, while English-speaking ones used it to insist on the necessity of "national unity" for the country. Even the difference in meaning and use of the term "national" illustrates the gap in understanding.

The explosive potential of this difference in perception was emphasized by a man in Saskatoon who registered his own concern that, "Unless the bi-national character of the Canadian state is recognized by the English as well as by the French, the future of this country is very much in doubt." But even with such a blunt statement of the problem, it seemed that the dualistic idea of a nation was still foreign to most of the participants in this meeting—and in many others.

A  
coincidence  
of  
opposites

34. Interestingly enough, the idea was also unacceptable to many French-speaking Canadians, especially those who advocated a new and distinct political status for Quebec. They gave to the word "nation" almost the same meaning as many English-speaking Canadians whom



we heard. For them also, the nation and the state must coincide; there simply cannot be two "nations" in one state. But then, of course, this one "nation-state" must be a French Canadian state.

Such a coincidence of opposites was often evident: the language and way of thinking of many French-speaking Canadians anxious for a radical change—whatever specific new political arrangement they desired—was much closer to the language and way of thinking of those English-speaking Canadians who hold a unitary concept of Canada, than it was to the traditional language and thinking of other French-speaking Canadians. But of course their respective conclusions were in dramatic opposition: we mean by this, that those who openly promote the idea of a fully independent Quebec, and those who are in sympathy with this view, put the same maximum emphasis on unity as do many English-speaking Canadians. Both groups insist on the necessity of unity of language and culture within one country. In the light of this conviction, French Canadian separatists expressed before us their belief in the inevitability of a sovereign Quebec. To the slogans "One nation, Canada", or "One Canada, two nations", their answer is, "One nation, Quebec". Many times during our regional meetings, we felt that from a certain point of view, the very existence of Quebec separatism is a response to the unitary concept of Canada held by English-speaking Canadians: people who felt that, because of their cultural and linguistic differences they were being pushed into a reserve, concluded that the only way out was to build an independent state where they would be free.

35. A special problem brought into sharp relief by the concept of two founding peoples is of course the situation of the Canadian Indian and Eskimo. Their unique position was put most poignantly in Sudbury by an Indian woman who asked the evening meeting, "Why is the Indian always forgotten? This was the first culture and this was the first language in Canada. We are told that the BNA Act was between the French and English—where was the Indian during this time?" In Toronto, in the course of a conversation with the members of the Indian Advisory Committee of the Ontario Department of Public Welfare, the chiefs who were present after recalling that many Indians speak French, summed up their fate in this way: 'If the French people think that they lost a lot of their rights since Confederation, what should the Indian say? They lost the whole land.' One of the participants in the discussion protested about school text-books: 'Our children learn that Indians are all savages.' Finally the increasing assimilation of the Indians who are forced to leave the reserves for economic reasons was the object of another statement: 'As soon as an Indian wants to succeed in Canadian life he must assimilate. They [Canadians] call them non-Indian-Indians. . . Furthermore, close to

Canadian  
Indians and  
Eskimos

80 per cent of the Ontario young Indians are marrying others than Indians.'

The Eskimo was not present at our "southern" meetings, so a tour of the Eastern Arctic was made by two Commissioners: there the problems of the written languages, the school system and the economic future were discussed with Eskimo Community Councils, government officials and missionaries.

We found great sympathy in "white" audiences for the plight in which Canada's two indigenous peoples find themselves, as the relentless march of North American industry and technology moves into territories once exclusively their own. We were impressed by this unanimity of views.

## B) Objections to duality: Multiculturalism

"Second-class citizens?"

36. *Dualistic concepts* of Canada variously expressed in the terms, "equal partnership", "two founding races" and "two nations", encountered opposition, as we have said, from Canadians who wanted their country, however they define it, to be seen as a single entity. These unitary concepts will be treated more fully below.

However, the idea of Canada having a dual nature aroused fears among members of the other ethnic groups. The question was posed in Winnipeg: "Are we, west of the Ontario border, to be considered second-class citizens? We are a third of the population in this country. . . and should be considered equal citizens." "Is there some justification," asked a man in Sudbury, "for members of the other groups to be afraid of being caught in a power play, right in the centre [between the English and the French]?" Or, as stated in Kingston, is it true that "my freedoms are actually limited because my extraction is not from one of the so-called founding races?"

This fear that other ethnic groups might be forgotten in the developing dialogue between Canadians of French and British origin was coupled with a strong affirmation of their importance to Canada. On several occasions this was expressed by an over-estimation of their numbers, as by the Winnipeg speaker who said: "We are the third element of the population of this country, of which I think our proportion today is almost one-third."\*

We were reminded of the prominent role which men and women from Germany, the Ukraine, the Scandinavian countries, Holland, Poland and elsewhere had played in the settlement of the West. In

\*The 1961 Census of Canada establishes at 13.5 p.c. those Canadians whose mother tongue is other than English or French, while those of non-French, non-British origin constitute 25.8 p.c. of the population. Of course, this "third element" is composed of many different linguistic groups, the most important of which are listed in the Working Paper of Appendix IV.



many communities, we were told, a vigorous sense of cultural identity persists. A Saskatchewan lawyer wrote in a letter to the Commission: "The Dominion government . . . settled the different immigrant nationalities in little island groups with the result that we have large areas which are bilingual. They [the immigrant groups] speak the language of their respective fatherlands and English. Some of the older generations speak nothing but their native tongue."

This picture of non-French, non-British Canadians as pioneers contrasted sharply with the tendency of some participants at the regional meetings either to ignore them or to think of them only as recent immigrants. The term "New Canadian", which was used so often, did not satisfy the desire for distinctive recognition which was felt especially by Ukrainian Canadians, whose grandfathers had been among the first to plough the open lands of the Prairies. For those Canadians of German descent whose ancestors came to Nova Scotia or Ontario in the eighteenth century, the expression, "New Canadian" was even more inapplicable. The desire of these groups to be seen as a special element in Canadian life was strongest on the Prairies. Elsewhere, solidarity with English or, in some cases, French Canada, was more often emphasized.

37. What image of Canada would do justice to the presence of these varied ethnic groups? This question preoccupied western participants especially, and the answer they often gave was "multiculturalism", or, more elaborately, "the Canadian mosaic". They asked: If two cultures are accepted, why not many? Why should Canada not be a country in which a multitude of cultural groups live side by side yet distinct from one another, all contributing to a richly varied society? Certainly, it was stated, the mosaic idea was infinitely preferable to the "melting pot".

Sometimes, however, a vision emerged of the separate elements, which derive from countries other than Britain and France, being welded together into a new corporate entity. At the preliminary hearing in Ottawa it was said: "We respectfully acknowledge the fact that the problem is primarily with the two founding races, the French-speaking Canadians and the British Canadians, but over the years a third force, a vital force, has emerged and this force must be recognized." And sometimes this "force" was seen in relation to the two main groups, stabilizing, mediating, uniting. One spokesman declared: "The ethnic groups in Canada are, and will continue to be, a unifying force, a cementing force in the Confederation of Canada."

An attempt was made at some regional meetings to discover what unifying values are held in common by Canadians of German, Italian, Chinese, Ukrainian and other ethnic extraction, but a full discussion didn't seem to follow, and this variant on the multicultural theme

"New  
Canadians"

The mosaic

Third force

Unity in  
diversity

tended to blend with the mosaic idea. Indeed the notion of a "third force" had few supporters even among the "New Canadians".

38. Is there some way of reconciling the concepts of dualism and multiculturalism? A great deal of ingenuity and goodwill was sometimes devoted to the task, and we were struck by the fact that several speakers of Polish and Ukrainian origin made a point of expressing themselves in both English and French at our preliminary hearing in Ottawa in November 1963. Once the disquieting idea of "second-class citizenship" had been aired and the strongest possible protest lodged against it, an occasional participant would voice an opinion like that expressed in Kingston: "The demands of bilingualism are justified. We do not see any justification for the introduction of other official languages. We are opposed to any 'balkanization' and to the idea of the 'melting pot'. In the complex ethnic situation existing in Canada, the only kind of unity which can reasonably be striven for and achieved is unity in diversity: the harmonious co-operation of all ethnic groups in the Canadian country as a whole.

Recognition  
of other  
languages?

More frequently, however, speakers would turn to specific issues. It was suggested to us that there could be special recognition of languages other than French and English without these other languages being given official status. Others pointed out that the maintenance of religious groups is intimately linked with the preservation of language. Once or twice, indeed, it was proposed that the word "bilingualism" in the Commission's terms of reference should be interpreted to mean either French or English plus the mother tongue of the individual in question. The teaching of languages other than French and English as optional subjects in schools and universities; greater use of these languages on radio and television; public aid to cultural projects—these were the ideas which were advanced most often in attempts to give solid substance to the abstract concept of a multicultural Canada.

## C) "One Canada"

## Regionalism

39. Time and again, during our evening meetings outside Quebec, we could sense a growing unease in part of the audience when the discussion dwelt on differences between Canadians, and we could predict that before long a spokesman for the "One Canada" idea would rise and take the microphone. Sometimes he would express disquiet about regionalism and provincialism; sometimes it was the idea of divisions on the basis of language or culture. 'Let's all be Canadians,' we were told repeatedly, but the meaning of the phrase varied subtly from speaker to speaker.

The sense of regional or provincial identity that many English Canadians appear to possess usually came out in statements which began: 'We Maritimers' or 'We Westerners', or 'Here in Ontario we think . . . ' but what followed was never an attempt to reject wider loyalties. Indeed loyalty to the region or province was not seen as a substitute for loyalty to the country, as we sometimes found in Quebec. Rather, the participant would draw attention to factors in the history or geography, or in the economic and social life of his locality which, to him, were his first concerns and coloured his view of the whole Canadian situation. He by no means wished himself and his fellows to be lumped together indiscriminately with those Canadians who lived half a continent away. Yet even though the affirmation of uniqueness went no further than this, it was likely to provoke a response such as that of the speaker in Calgary who said, "I don't want to be identified as an Albertan, or as a Saskatchewanian, or an Ontarian; I wish to be considered a Canadian"; or the participant in Victoria, who said that it is "a matter of loyalty: if Canada is a country, and we are Canadians, then we should be as one in looking for the good of Canada."

40. The "One Canada" idea was often expressed even more vigorously. What effect would the recognition of multiculturalism have on education, asked a man in Port Arthur: "If 75 Ukrainian families wish to have Ukrainian taught in the high school then do 60 French families have the same right? 55 Finnish families? 30 Italian families? 20 Norwegians? Is there not a danger that the country will become balkanized?" This fear of "balkanization" led a number of participants to plump for the American "melting pot" idea. Canadians of British origin were not the only ones to make this choice. Indeed it was a first generation immigrant from Europe to Winnipeg who called for the "development of a truly unique Canadian culture" as opposed to a "polycultural kind of nation."

What would this single Canadian culture, to which all should assimilate, be like? Usually the answer was clear and explicit. "If we want to have a nation," according to a Winnipeg man, "there is only one way and that's for all of us to look at each other and say we are Canadians regardless of ethnic origin and regardless of the language you speak in your home. You are a Canadian and if English is the predominating tongue in this country then that is what we will speak." And in New Brunswick a discussion leader reported that his group believed "Canada and New Brunswick should be unilingual, and if people want to stay in Canada, let them learn English." Again in Yarmouth, a participant expressed his distaste for "hyphenated Canadianism." He disliked "to hear people speaking about English Canada, French Canada or whatever it may be." This was an oft-repeated opinion among English Canadians, and it sometimes seemed that those who stated it felt that

"Balkanization"  
or assimilation



The "unnatural-  
ness" of French  
language and  
culture in  
North America

discarding the term "English Canada" was exactly equivalent to setting aside the phrase "French Canada". A man in London thought otherwise: "For an English Canadian to say that he is a Canadian without prefix involves no sacrifice," he said, "because Canada for him is an enlargement of what he knows as an Ontarian, as a Manitoban or as a Nova Scotian, but when we say that a French Canadian should be a Canadian really like us . . . we are asking him to make the supreme sacrifice."

41. Perhaps the reason why this last point was not more fully discussed among English Canadians was because of a widespread feeling, which cropped up persistently, that it was "unnatural" to speak anything but English in North America.

In St. John's, Nfld., we heard: "The standard process of history is for a minority to be assimilated or absorbed. What we are doing . . . here is to stand in the way of that process."

At the same place: "The feeling is that if this [assimilation] has happened to other ethnic groups, why hasn't it happened to the French Canadians?"

In Windsor: "Canada is a melting pot . . . French Canadians will inevitably be assimilated."

In Saskatoon: a discussion group wondered why assimilation has not already taken place and concluded that this is due to article 133 of the constitution; thus French Canada is the artificial, almost accidental result of a decision taken by politicians at the beginning of Confederation. In Victoria, during a private press meeting, we were asked in an aggressive tone of voice whether it is true that French Canadians are compelled to learn French 'by the Roman Catholic Church, the Liberal Party and the Social Credit Party.' The group of people around us seemed to attach great weight to this question.

When our public meetings were over and we met in conversation with local people, we were told stories which illustrated even more vividly the idea of the artificiality of non-English culture. For example: On the Prairies an English Canadian, upon hearing some people from Quebec speaking French among themselves, went up to them and, in a friendly way, asked them about different aspects of their life. Among other things he said: 'Your children may learn French in class, but which language do they speak when they go out to play?' In other words: in class they are forced to listen to their instructors; but when they are allowed out don't they speak English like everyone else? In another part of the country, some ladies who had spent some time in Quebec showed their surprise at having heard very young children speaking French. How on earth, they seemed to be asking, do three-year olds and five-year olds manage to speak a language which adults [of a different culture] find so difficult to learn? This naïveté is not uncom-

mon: the simplest and most natural of acts, that of speaking from infancy the language of one's parents, takes on the appearance of a veritable feat of genius to those who forget that this language is the children's own mother tongue.

42. Nothing could be more foreign to the thinking of the French Canadians we met than the idea that their language and their culture are an artificial fact in North America: to some it was even an insult. At one time a group of English Canadians were speaking with a certain detachment of the "French minority", when a French Canadian present suddenly flung at them: "Do you know, gentlemen, that French has been spoken in Quebec without a break since 1608!"<sup>13\*</sup> We felt that, moved by a feeling of hurt pride, that man was presenting his letters patent of nobility.

It was even implied at times that French Canadians are the only "true" Canadians. English-speaking Canadians were often referred to as "les Anglais" or as "les Anglo-Saxons", a term which English-speaking people of Scottish or Irish descent let alone German or Ukrainian, heard without pleasure but not without surprise. Sometimes it was meant as a term of opprobrium, but more often it was simply an everyday phrase used to describe English-speaking Canadians, just as the latter frequently refer to "the French", meaning French Canadians. At Chicoutimi one speaker remarked bitterly, "All we're doing here is making the English rich..."<sup>14</sup> But at Rimouski another participant talked about "our friends, the English".<sup>15</sup> Whatever the other overtones, such expressions seemed to carry with them the idea that English Canadians were not really rooted in Canada, that they were recent arrivals linked still to another land. The *real* way, the *natural* way, to be Canadian was to be *French Canadian*.\*\*

Though the expression "Québec d'abord"—"Quebec first"—was not often heard in our meetings in French Canada, the idea behind these words seemed to inspire many of the attitudes expressed. Most par-

The  
persistence  
of French

"Québec  
d'abord"

\*The Acadian branch is even four years older than the Quebec one: Acadia was already in existence in present day Nova Scotia in 1604. Thus the French have been established in North America for three and a half centuries and in two original homes: Quebec, numerically the most important, and Acadia, whose main centre has become New Brunswick. As a result of distance and the vagaries of history, the French in Quebec and those in Acadia have long lived quite separately and have developed what may be called two strong regional particularisms. However, the unifying factors are equally strong such as the possession of a common origin and language, the North American environment and the feeling of belonging to the same "French minority" within the country.

People from the two groups spread across Canada; we found descendants of the French from Quebec or from Acadia everywhere, from Halifax to Victoria. We heard the sentence mentioned above ("French has been spoken in Quebec without a break since 1608") from a middle-aged man in Manitoba, who did not forget to add that his own family had been established in Canada since the seventeenth century. This sort of remark heard in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island as well as in Ontario or British Columbia, led us to think that many members of the various French minority groups carried with them, even into the provinces most remote from Quebec, the consciousness of a historical continuity and a feeling of French solidarity.

\*\*This is the reverse of the feeling among some English Canadians, noted above, that to be French-speaking in Canada is not quite normal. It is often forgotten in Quebec that English settlement ante-dates French in large areas of Canada, notably in Hudson's Bay and the Arctic, in most of Ontario and the Prairies, and in British Columbia. Here the presence of the French appears as strange as the presence of the English in Chicoutimi or Beauce regions.



ticipants evidently took for granted the primary importance of Quebec as a society and especially as a political entity. This assumption seemed so strong and so clear that it was considered unnecessary to state it in so many words.

In their extreme formulations, the two expressions "One Canada" and "Québec d'abord"—appear to be in sharp contrast to each other. Those who held such different ideas were in agreement, however, in that they did not believe in equal partnership.

#### D) Presence of the United States

##### Ambivalent reactions

43. Quite often proximity and influence of the United States were mentioned as inevitable and pervasive forces in Canadian life. The implacable fact of that rich and powerful neighbour still had a kind of inhibiting or distracting effect on attempts to debate the Canadian situation.

Indeed discussions on this point often seemed ambivalent. A number of participants expressed a strong desire for personal and national independence on the one hand, while on the other hand they emphasized the existing cultural and economic dependence on the United States. Likewise, for many, the desire for independence was tempered by a lively awareness of the greater economic development and higher standard of living across the border.

The principal concern of those who raised this question at our meetings centred on the manner in which the tremendous disproportion in population, wealth and power between the two countries threatens Canada's survival as an independent state, and gives new significance to the concept of equal partnership. There were several ways in which this interrelationship was discussed by participants.

##### Biculturalism, a distinguishing feature

44. First, many of those who viewed any form of union or dependence on the United States as undesirable, regarded the bicultural and bilingual nature of Canadian society as the major—if not the only—distinguishing feature which would keep Canada independent. This point of view, heard frequently, was most often put forward, as in Windsor, in the form of a warning that, "We must all be interested in Canadian culture for I fear if we are not, we Canadians could soon be engulfed and drowned by the American culture." In London, one man clearly stated his support of biculturalism as a bulwark against the merging of Canada with the United States when he said, "Equal rights across the country for both cultures and both languages—this will be a terrific barrier to being swallowed up by the large state to the south, which may be very friendly, but which can take many little things that we want and [things] that we are prepared to pay a dividend to keep."

This man, like many others, saw biculturalism as the only safeguard against cultural annexation, and he went on to say: "I do not think we have a chance of keeping [Canada independent] unless we do develop something which will clearly distinguish it culturally from that mass reservoir. We are going to be sucked in with or without any pressure from them. We have to become a bicultural and bilingual nation completely from coast to coast."

45. Others, however, saw the dominance of the United States as inevitable, and some kind of union with them not only as probable but desirable. A participant on the Prairies stated bluntly at the evening meeting, without a particularly noticeable reaction from others attending, that on the North American continent a French-speaking Quebec was "socially ridiculous," and went on to say that an independent Canada was "economically ridiculous". A similar point of view was expressed by a participant in the Maritimes, who said "The only time we had prosperity here was when we could trade with the Yankees, prior to the twentieth century." People holding such views had no patience with the idea of equal partnership. One man in Vancouver praised the "wisdom" the Americans showed in choosing "the English language as the one and only language for the U.S.A."

The economic  
pressure

Some Canadians, who did not see union or a close relationship with the United States as desirable, still considered that economic realities increasingly dictate that the primary language in Canada must be English. This opinion was expressed by both French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians, although they usually derived different conclusions from it. In Saskatoon a man stated that, "As time goes on there will be fewer and fewer people who will be purely French-speaking and more and more people will be English-speaking. Quebec is not only a part of Canada, it is also a part of the North American economy and there is a tide flowing that economically will force them to become increasingly industrialized in that province and to have a knowledge, and a good knowledge, of the language of commerce. That language of commerce, I think we'll have to admit, will be English in the North American economy."

The idea of North American economic necessity and linguistic pressure being a barrier to equal partnership was also voiced by French Canadians. Thus in Chicoutimi: "'How necessary is English?' you may ask me now. We must not forget that we live among 200 million English-speaking people. It would be utopian to imagine that those who live in the region of the Saguenay or in the Province of Quebec can restrict themselves to their mother tongue when they live on the North American continent."<sup>10</sup> A participant in Rimouski also emphasized the language pressure stemming from Quebec's position in the North American economy, pointing out that, "It is not because we have English-

speaking people in Confederation that we have to speak English, it's because we have the neighbours to the south, the United States."<sup>17</sup>

Some French-speaking Canadians thus affirmed a heightened sense of their minority position in relation to North American population and language factors. English-speaking participants also saw this situation as a factor accentuating the minority position of French-speaking Canadians. Some mentioned what they considered to be the resulting insularity of French Canada. Thus in St. John's: "They [French Canada] are an island, feel themselves to be isolated and feel that they have to strike out, to resist, to withstand, to hang onto what they have." English-speaking Canadians, on the other hand, obviously felt an added sense of linguistic and cultural security based on their possession of a common language along with some 200 million others. As one living in the Saguenay region (which is predominantly French-speaking) explained, "There are some penalties to pay for being in the minority here, such as education, where English-speaking school facilities are necessarily restricted. On the other hand, being in the minority does not disturb me because I know I have the weight of 200 million English-speaking Americans behind me."

U.S. proximity  
minimizes  
bicultural  
aspect of  
Canada

American proximity was seen by some English-speaking Canadians, especially in Western Canada, as one of the prime reasons against accepting biculturalism and bilingualism as a great issue in Canada, and dealing with it in the light of the concept of equal partnership. The major contemporary problem for Canada, they felt, was rather the question of north-south economic and social relationships, and the weakening of east-west ties. In the case of British Columbia, for example, the Commission had the feeling that many B.C. citizens thought of themselves as belonging socially, economically and culturally to the Canadian-American Pacific Coast region, and were thus indifferent to the concerns of distant French Canada.

A response  
to separatism

46. In some parts of the country, the probability or possibility of union with the United States was advanced as a response to warnings that Quebec might seek independence. A man in Saskatoon stated, "It is eminently obvious that if we separate into two nations, French Canada and English Canada, then neither one of them will exist any more—we will all become Americans." Others used the idea almost as a threat with which to compel French-speaking Canadians to moderate their demands, as in Kingston where a speaker suggested that, "If Quebec wants to withdraw, they should be free to do so; the rest of us might then form a union party who, if we could get into Parliament, would approach the United States and ask to be taken in. For after all, 60 per cent of our economy is controlled by the United States. We think, we feel, and dress and eat American, so why not accept the *fait accompli*?" The other side of the coin turned up in Quebec, where some separatist



sympathizers commented that if a separate State of Quebec were not feasible, then the next most obvious and propitious solution would be union of that province with the United States. They cited the example of Puerto Rico, a non-English-speaking country. After having listened to this sort of talk, one journalist confided to us his feeling of despair; he was beginning to see Canada as ‘a long ship leaking in many places, but sinking so gradually that almost nobody wants to admit it.’<sup>18</sup>

47. The imposing model of the “melting pot” to the south was often in the back of people’s minds as they discussed the question of unity, as against a duality or even a multiplicity of cultures. The “success” of the American experiment was presented by some as evidence of the futility of cultural duality in Canada, as in Kingston where a man affirmed, “What is going to happen here, regardless of what we say or what we think, is the same thing that happened in the United States—the old melting pot theory.” However, a Halifax citizen took a different view, stating, “A nation with two cultures is original. The Americans have a melting pot culture and have done a darned good job of it! . . . But I think we should try something different.”

The U.S. as an example of cultural uniformity

The Commission on occasion also received a strong impression that the over-powering presence of the U.S. obscures the sense of national identity and responsibility among Canadians. The link with the larger country was seen both as a peril and a protection. Very few audiences seemed willing to decide whether to resist the peril or embrace the protection.

48. In summary, many French-speaking Canadians felt intensely that their demands for new conditions must be recognized without delay, and carried out by specific measures; non-French participants disagreed or hesitated. They did not know of the intensity of these feelings in French Canada or they did not understand the reasons for them. They saw the issues in their own and very different terms. Members of some of the other “ethnic groups” were afraid that in the outcome their place in Canadian society might be endangered. Many English-speaking Canadians were fearful that recognition of a dual society might lead to a splintering of the country. And behind all the discussion lay the shadow of the United States of America.

Recapitulation









49. These concepts of Canada grouped in the preceding chapter make up a pattern of contrasts and contradictions. At times indeed, they are violently opposed to one another. Yet they must be taken seriously because to the Canadians we met they are part of the fabric of everyday life. Whether they have evolved from personal experience, or whether, on the contrary, they have given it meaning, all the people we heard attached great importance to the institutions around them. Because political, cultural, economic and social institutions form the framework of their daily lives and often determine the choice of their language. Here again, we were struck by the complexity of the Canadian situation, and also by the frequent inability of the people who took part in our meetings to surmount the barriers between cultures.

French-speaking Canadians in general insisted on the need for institutions which could safeguard and promote the French language and culture and give it full expression. In Sudbury this opinion was put in the following terms, "In order to have a culture (I am referring to the French minority in Ontario in particular), in order to be French, we need a French environment, we need French institutions, we need to be able to live in French."<sup>19</sup> In Sherbrooke the present ferment among the youth of Quebec was explained to us in this way: "These young people have realized that French culture is more than just speaking French every day . . . it is also perhaps a way of thinking."<sup>20</sup> Again in Chicoutimi: "We must find a way for the two cultures to have equal opportunities of development, equal representation in those institutions which are the great manifestations of a culture."<sup>21</sup> In Sherbrooke one participant stated that French Canadians ought to be able to feel at home in Canada from sea to sea. But one French Canadian woman who had been living for the past year in Kenora, Ontario, expressed her sense of disappointment in these terms: "I don't feel in my own country because when I say my name, 'Castonguay' they say: 'What? What are you talking about?' . . . You see, I am a foreigner . . ."

English-speaking Canadians, on the whole, attached much less importance to the purely institutional basis for the fostering of languages and cultures. Even in Quebec—apart from a few exceptions—none of the English-speaking participants seemed to have the slightest anxiety about their language or culture. On the other hand many people in English Canada showed much interest in means of bringing about better understanding between the two main cultural groups of the country. In general, however, they seldom went further than to suggest certain specific and limited changes to which we shall return later. In Saskatoon a school teacher spoke strongly against what he considered to be the futile idea of trying to build a protective wall around a culture by means of institutions: "I don't think a culture is safeguarded or maintained. I don't think you can lock it behind walls. I don't think you can pre-

Introduction

French  
Canadians'  
points of viewEnglish-  
speaking  
opinions

serve it. It must live on its own power.” Again in Saskatoon another speaker picked up the idea that seeking an institutional protection for languages leads in the end to the building of a cultural ghetto. ‘Just as in Ireland, French Canadians have refused to accept defeat. They have kept themselves isolated, on the fringe of the main stream of civilization. Instead of forgetting the past they have stayed aloof, busily licking their wounds.’

It would be quite unfair however to leave the impression that the majority of English-speaking people at the meetings shared that opinion. Many of them, on the contrary, spent a good deal of time in speculating about what kind of institutional means might be effective in promoting bilingualism or in ensuring the survival of the French minorities. However, probably because they felt no particular threat to their own language and culture, their feelings rarely were expressed with the sense of urgency and insecurity so common among the French Canadians we heard. Furthermore, the two groups put different values on the importance of various kinds of institutions.

In order to bring out the differences and contrasts we shall now summarize in succession, opinions expressed about four fields, namely education, the mass media of communication, public services, and economic institutions. Then we shall deal with opinions about the French minorities, and the English-speaking minority in Quebec. Finally, we shall outline the positions taken by participants with regard to language problems.

### A) Education

Questions  
raised by  
English-speaking  
people

50. Divergent attitudes of English and French-speaking people were decidedly noticeable in discussions about the role of education in the acquiring of a second language and culture. This was a topic which stimulated people to take up a number of different themes, and to express a wide range of opinions.

English-speaking Canadians tended to deal with matters that to the French Canadians were much less interesting, particularly to the Quebecers, who touched on them only incidentally. These subjects were chiefly the teaching of history, the establishing of a uniform standard of education, student and teacher exchanges, and federal responsibility in the field of education.

Teaching the  
second language  
in the schools

51. Most of the participants recognized the necessity of teaching the second language in school, but their approach to the question varied greatly.

A number of English-speaking Canadians were so enthusiastic they suggested the second language should be included in the elementary

school curriculum beginning with the first grade. Thus in Fredericton, "We should try in our educational system to make provisions so that the children of English-speaking parents can learn French right from their first year in school and that the children of French-speaking parents can learn English right from their first year in school . . . so that we might truly become bilingual."

In Quebec, on the other hand, people were much more cautious. In Chicoutimi, for example, one participant warned the audience, "You must not forget that the first symbol of an ethnic group is its language. Personally, I think English should not be taught in the elementary schools, nor in the high schools but only at the end of high school. First of all let's learn our own language and after that we can learn English."<sup>22</sup> And a speaker, after having made it clear that he shared this opinion, emphasized that he did not believe . . . "bilingualism could be established just through some school plan."<sup>23</sup> Another criticized the current trend towards the teaching of English at an earlier and earlier age in the schools: "As soon as a child starts to learn, they begin to pump English into his head."<sup>24</sup>

52. French-speaking Canadians insisted on the right of the French minorities to be taught in their own language, and some English-speaking Canadians were warm in their support of the fairness of this demand. Thus, in Winnipeg, a French Canadian who expressed his fear that the French language would disappear in Manitoba because of the absence of French schools, received this reassurance: "Each of the two founding nations or peoples, the French and the English, is entitled to be sure that their language is preserved wherever there is a reasonable number of people who speak that language. In other words, right here the French people of Manitoba are entitled to preserve their language . . . and to have their language taught in the elementary schools where there is a reasonable demand for same." Again in Winnipeg the spokesman for a discussion group reported this unanimous conclusion, "Wherever there is a large enough community of French Canadians, that the teaching in French be permitted as well as the teaching of French in all schools."

A number of French-speaking Canadians, however, did not limit their claims to the elementary level alone. Thus in Sudbury, "We want a complete educational system which would mean French elementary schools, high schools and university colleges."<sup>25</sup> Another participant spoke of what he considered the disastrous consequences of the lack, according to him, of French schools beyond the elementary level, "[In Ontario] we can get our education in French at the elementary level but the moment we reach high school we are deprived of that right. We have to go to a private school and pay \$500.00 a year. But if we want to go to a public high school we have to take all the subjects in English, except the French courses. Then at university [here the participant had

French schools  
for minority  
groups

Complete  
educational  
system in  
French



in mind a bilingual university in Ontario] we have another option, we can take the courses either in French or in English. But what actually happens is that people are handicapped; we become second-class students . . . ”<sup>26</sup> No English-speaking Canadians undertook to deal with this particularly delicate aspect of the situation, about which there seemed to be much confusion and ignorance.

#### French normal schools

53. Some French-speaking Canadians insisted on the need to establish French normal schools in the Maritimes, Ontario and the Prairie Provinces. Such institutions, of course, would have as their first purpose the training of teachers for the French-speaking areas, but they could also provide a supply of French-language teachers, the lack of which seems to be so widely deplored in English-speaking circles. Some French Canadians pointed to what they consider a “lack of logic”, even a “proof of the hyprocrisy” of English Canadians: ‘they want French teachers, they tell us, and they imagine we are going to supply them when at the same time they keep us from training them by refusing to give us French normal schools.’<sup>27</sup>

In New Brunswick there is one bilingual normal school, at Fredericton, but many French-speaking people want an exclusively French institution to be opened in a centre with a large Acadian population. An English-speaking woman student and a French-speaking male student of the bilingual school found themselves in an argument over the matter. The girl was in favour of maintaining the present system and she made her plea in hesitant French, which nevertheless managed to convey the strength of her feeling. She insisted on the advantages of having one institution in which students of each culture find themselves thrown together with the other and are thus enabled to learn the second language, as her own experience illustrated. The boy, on the other hand, said he was convinced that the present practice worked to the advantage of the dominant language, in this case English.

#### The question of bilingual schools

The question of bilingual schools never failed to provoke similar debates. In Moncton, to give one example, we heard Acadian educators and students doing their best in a discussion group to explain to their English-speaking colleagues that in the local situation, such a system would be extremely harmful to the future of the French language, which is in a precarious position in New Brunswick, according to them. ‘You must understand,’ they were saying substantially, ‘that the real situation of the Acadians today is tragic, and the tragedy for us lies in the fact that we no longer have any language. We are losing French without in the process acquiring English. Instead of asking us to attend bilingual schools, please allow us first of all to improve the quality of our French schools. Give us time to learn our own language and to assimilate our own culture. We live in an environment that is saturated with English. If we are deprived of a refuge where we can

be sure that our mother tongue will be protected, that language will die out. As for English,' they added, 'have no fear, we'll be able to speak it.'<sup>28</sup>

Elsewhere, people were concerned about the fact that many French Canadian teachers from Quebec turn down offers to teach in other provinces, apparently because there are no French institutions in the centres to which they are invited. In Chicoutimi one of the participants pointed out that the lack of co-ordination between the Quebec educational system and that of the other provinces is an obstacle to the mobility of French Canadians from Quebec.

54. Some people were in favour of recognizing not only French and English in the teaching system, but other languages as well. Thus in Winnipeg, "The question of teaching of German, of Ukrainian, should be fully permitted and fully recognized with full credits wherever they are taken." Or again: "We firmly believe that in order to be good Canadians we must acknowledge and master our own cultural background and language. We would like to see the Ukrainian language on a par with other languages." We heard similar demands at Port Arthur and on the Prairies.

Some English-speaking people could not see reasons for insistence on the teaching of only French as a second language. Thus in Edmonton, "I don't believe that we should prefer French to any other language. I don't see why there is such a terrible emphasis just on French." And in Vancouver it became, "I am a little afraid if this French language is forced further afield, then they will also want Chinese." In order to prevent this, one particularly aggressive member of the audience proposed a radical solution, "I think this whole thing could be settled so easily if they would teach their children English in school in Quebec."

In Victoria, an Indian chief stated that after doing everything to cause the extinction of the Indian language in that region by taking drastic steps to exclude it from the schools, Canadians are now asking that it be exhibited for the tourist trade, even though it is hardly spoken now. 'When my wife, my brother and myself die, no one will speak my people's language any longer.'

As far as the maintenance of the Indian languages is concerned, the Commission has noted that opinion is not unanimous. In part this is explained by the variety of Indian languages, each of which may have its local dialects. In these conditions, English very naturally becomes the lingua franca of the Indian band and all the more so since they see the knowledge of that language as an economic necessity: "The whole world speaks English," most of the chiefs told us at a meeting of the Indian-Eskimo Association in London. On the other hand, the Eskimos we met were practically all in favour of keeping their language: although

The recruitment  
of teachers of  
French in  
Quebec

Teaching other  
languages

A shortage  
of qualified  
teachers and  
inefficient  
teaching  
methods

they were convinced that their children should learn English, they also asked that Eskimo be taught in the schools.

55. In all parts of Canada people deplored the lack of qualified staff who could teach the second language competently in the schools—this would explain the “poor” results obtained even after several years of study. French-speaking teachers should be teaching French and English-speaking teachers should be teaching English—but here again, ‘where are such teachers to be found?’

There was a feeling in many quarters that better techniques for second language teaching are badly needed. We venture to say that on this point there was almost perfect unanimity: all parties joined in deploring or denouncing “the dismal failure” in teaching the second language, English or French, properly in Canada.

Unfavourable  
environment

A number of English-speaking people, like some French-speaking Quebecers, told us that their main handicap to learning the second language was the lack of opportunity to speak it outside the classroom. Thus in Halifax: “I suggest there is little or no motivation for people in Nova Scotia to learn French and the reason is that there is no requirement for French in the normal business of the province and/or social intercourse in the province. For this reason I would suggest that there is no reason for the people nor motivation other than school examinations . . . ” To this the following remark by a citizen of Rimouski corresponds very closely: “In an environment where only French is normally spoken, a child has no motivation to learn the other language.”<sup>29</sup> Typical North American opinion! was the reply of another participant whose background was European. “In Europe you get children going to school who learn three or four languages at one time, not only two.”

Denomina-  
tionalism creates  
an obstacle

56. The religious character of French schools, according to some English-speaking Canadians, is another obstacle to the teaching of the second language and, more generally, to the integration of those schools into the educational systems of the provinces, Quebec excepted. They suggested that schools should be differentiated on a linguistic rather than a religious basis. Thus the spokesman for a group of students in Vancouver stated: “We have tentatively agreed this morning that we would be prepared to see the establishment of French-speaking schools in British Columbia, state supported, provided they were non-confessional.”

One English-speaking person from Quebec pointed out how difficult it is for Protestant schools in that province to retain the services of a French-speaking Catholic teacher. The situation is at least as bad for French-speaking Protestants. But everyone seemed to be convinced that this paradoxical situation would soon be changed.



Finally, we might mention the intervention of one woman who saw in the French Canadians' insistence on retaining the confessional character of their schools evidence of a plain, outright conspiracy: "What the French Canadian wants is to be able to have the right to establish all through Canada the separate school system . . . That is the crux; that's what they want: to be able to scatter their increasing population throughout Canada but only on the condition that they will be able to have their own schools which are French and Roman Catholic."

This question of whether schools should or should not be confessional was also dealt with by French-speaking Canadians. Many of them were quick to admit that this is a real problem; and in each of the western provinces a few people expressed the opinion that the time had come to make a distinction between language and religion at the school level. Some people even told us privately that they considered such a distinction mandatory and that henceforth the French minorities should ask for French public schools rather than for confessional schools.

57. Very few Quebecers commented on the matters we have just referred to; they seemed to be satisfied with the language arrangements under the educational system in that province. We nevertheless must report this statement made by one English-speaking person in Chicoutimi, "Because of our small number here, we do not have the same opportunities as the French, for example, no technical training in English. I am not complaining . . . But to say that there are no penalties in the area for the English-speaking is not true."

In Quebec

58. In all this we have been coming close to a subject which we would now like to consider a little more deeply, as its importance was brought home to us on a number of occasions, namely the matter of religion. When they dealt with this subject, however, people showed much discretion and very few came at the matter directly.

Importance of  
the religious  
factor

We remember one very lively private gathering at the end of which someone said to one of us, 'No one raised the real question—no one spoke about religious differences.'<sup>30</sup> This according to him was the main cause of all the suspicion and dissension between the groups.

While this is certainly a vital question it is also an exceedingly delicate one. It seems to influence strongly the thinking of a certain number of English-speaking Protestants on the subject of Quebec. For instance the expression "priest-ridden province" was not used very often in our presence, but opinions about Quebec's "backwardness" in the field of education seemed to be based on a concept not too far from it. On several occasions it seemed to us that it was Roman Catholics who were the real target when certain participants were criticizing Quebecers. On the other hand, when some French Canadians were

complaining about the behaviour of the "English majority" they appeared to be thinking that it was at the same time a Protestant majority. But on both sides most seemed to think it improper to make allusions of this sort. They would crop up now and again in discussion groups where the atmosphere had become sufficiently informal and people felt free to speak more openly or, perhaps, to argue more heatedly.

At these moments we found that we asked ourselves, 'Where do the real antagonisms spring from? Do they come from the fact that the two groups speak different languages, or from the old religious divisions?' There is no complete answer to such a question, of course, but it may nevertheless be worth asking. In one of the western provinces a politician gave some of us the opinion that, 'It is not easy to get a Protestant majority accustomed to an entirely secular system to grant [to its Catholic minority] confessional schools. It is not easy to get an English-speaking majority to grant French schools to a small French minority. But when you come to ask a Protestant *and* English-speaking majority to agree to the establishment of a school that is both Catholic and French then you are really flying in the face of a number of beliefs and feelings at once.'

Another one declared, 'The expression "priest-ridden" may be taken as an insult. But it may also seem to describe an existing situation very accurately. When people in a province where the dominant concept of education has long been a secular one learn that there is not a single non-confessional public school in Quebec, they are often led to believe that the Church and clergy exercise a dominant influence in that province's system of education.'

On the other hand, in many Quebec circles the English-speaking Canadians' opposition to or disapproval of the confessional school is interpreted as an expression of hostility, not only towards Catholics but towards French Canada as a whole. It was in light of this, that some French Canadians directed their fire at the school legislation in most of the provinces with English-speaking majorities. They would say, 'Here in Quebec we have allowed the Protestants to organize their own school system as they see fit, but nowhere do they give Catholics the same freedom.'<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, it would be a mistake to imagine that the only divisions are between Catholics and Protestants—antagonisms often spring up within the body of a single denomination. Thus, in provinces where Catholics are in the minority we were told of tensions existing between English-speaking and French-speaking Catholics—the latter complaining very bitterly about the cultural influence the former are able to exercise over them to their detriment. There have been clashes between French Canadians and certain Ukrainian groups in the past,



and in some cases it seemed to us the wounds had not entirely healed.

In summary, nowhere did we meet up with any real, open religious conflict, or at least its echo failed to reach our ears. On the contrary, the climate appears to be favourable to the ecumenical movement and this development was referred to several times in our hearing, particularly in provinces with an English-speaking majority. Nevertheless, it seemed to us that despite the lessening of religious fanaticism everywhere, there are still certain prejudices lingering on underground, yet still able to engender certain hostile attitudes in different groups.

## B) Mass Media of Communication

59. Do our mass media provide vehicles for bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada? What role do they play, and what is their responsibility in these fields? Questions of this nature were heatedly discussed at most of the meetings we held outside Quebec.

Present  
deficiencies

The opinion was often expressed that, in a country as vast and thinly populated as Canada the opinion-forming media of communication have a particularly vital part to play. Some of the more informed groups stressed the fact that our regional differences, already considerable, are accentuated by the absence of truly national daily newspapers. There are only a very few publications which are distributed throughout English Canada and, at the same time, by publishing French editions, can reach the French-speaking public of Quebec.

Most of the daily newspapers are members of the Canadian Press. Because of the co-operative structure of that news agency they are sure of receiving all the stories of "national" interest; but here again, it was emphasized, the service goes through various regional offices which edit the material with a main eye to the areas they serve.

Radio and television, it was said, do not do much better as a whole than the printed media. It was noted that few programs are carried on both the English and French networks of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and that news, information and opinion programs vary greatly between the two. Most private stations, apart from entertainment, were said to concentrate much on matters of regional and local interest.

60. The question of the importance of radio and television in matters of language and culture was brought up at every regional meeting held outside Quebec. The French minority groups in a number of cases are faced with acute problems because they are deprived of service from these media in their own language. Thus in Vancouver one participant stated that, "For us this is almost the fundamental thing... our own children are hesitant when they are faced with the problem

A problem for  
the French-  
speaking  
minorities

of learning their own language because they never have the chance to listen to the major media of communication in French."<sup>32</sup>

Many English-speaking Canadians showed an understanding of this point of view and said they were in favour of extending the CBC's French network to the entire country. Some of them went on to add that this service would be of positive benefit to English-speaking Canadians as well since it would give them an opportunity of learning about French culture. Other people, however, opposed the idea as too costly. Indeed, to one participant in Halifax, the very existence of two networks was a factor of disunity and he proposed that they should be replaced by a single bilingual network. Finally, there were some who asked for radio and television programs in other languages besides English and French.

It should also be noted, that at the meetings held in Quebec there was an almost complete silence, on the part of both language groups, on this aspect of the situation. Since both French and English networks are well developed in that province, the problem simply does not arise there, and participants from both groups showed very little interest in the situation that prevails elsewhere. Attention in Quebec was concentrated obviously on other subjects.

A factor  
where ignorance  
is concerned

61. Several English-speaking participants were very modest and frank in admitting that they knew hardly anything about recent developments in the Province of Quebec. They blamed their ignorance on the failure of the mass media to do an adequate job of keeping them informed. This was one of the recurrent themes in English-speaking interventions, and speakers proved to be almost unanimous in their view, particularly in the West. The following are some typical examples:\*

From Victoria, 'Our discussion group felt very strongly that there was a good deal of ignorance in Western Canada about conditions in Quebec. It was suggested that press coverage gave only rather startling news of what was happening in Quebec. We're very much in the fog about it.'

From Vancouver, 'It was thought that, particularly because of their concentration on sensationalism in their reporting...the mass media were actually doing a disservice to the cause of biculturalism and bilingualism rather than a service.'

From Edmonton, 'About Quebec, we know only what we read in the newspapers. And we have the feeling that perhaps we get biased accounts.'

From Saskatoon, 'We touched on communications, and boy! Communications came in for quite a blast here. Our newspapers are biased.'

\*These are extracts from the discussion group reports; thus in most cases the opinions are those of the group.

From Kingston, "The culture of the French as being portrayed to the English on TV and radio systems is really a parody . . . It tends to make the English-speaking person think of the French-speaking person as the peasant, the lumberjack, the pea-souper, the eater-of-beans."

From Moncton, "[The English language media] do, I think, exaggerate anything bad or radical that happens in Quebec." A Halifax participant stated that, "without reading some French publications—Quebec publications—it is quite impossible to understand what is going on in Canada today." In St. John's, it was reported at the public meeting that, according to one opinion, "mass media were exaggerating the situation by publishing only the sensational aspects of the problem."\*

These opinions, like many others we are forced to leave out, underline strongly the responsibilities of journalism in all its forms. They criticize at the same time the techniques and even the style of modern informational media. They will need to be examined, taking into account, however, the situation as a whole. Some journalists told us that the matter is more complex than most consumers of news imagine. It was in this vein that we heard representatives of the mass media speaking of the resistance they meet in their readers, listeners, and (especially) viewers, concerning what quickly seems to them to be the "excess" of news and commentaries devoted to the "other" culture or the "other" society. In other words, the public seems to forget that generally the mass media tend to reflect their environment and give it what it asks for.

C) The Public Services

62. As we have just seen, when education and the mass media were involved, it was largely English-speaking Canadians and French-speaking minorities who suggested adjustments, while the French-speaking people in Quebec were reserved and non-committal. We shall now turn to the public service, transportation and the armed forces, and it will be seen that here the tendency is the opposite. While English-speaking Canadians admitted their dominant position they did not in general show themselves particularly eager to agree to any extensive changes. French-speaking Canadians, on the other hand, and particularly Quebecers, gave plentiful evidence of their dissatisfaction and of their intention of working to improve their position. This contrast is significant.

A significant contrast

63. French-speaking Canadians insistently brought up another problem—their role in the federal Civil Service, where the dominant working

The Public Services

\*This subject was referred to much less frequently in Quebec. It was only broached when people questioned the objectivity of the French newspapers on the grounds that English companies are mainly responsible for the commercial advertising that provides them with funds. Thus these newspapers were said to be closely connected with financial interests that have little or nothing to do with "la nation".



language is English. In Sudbury, one French Canadian, in answer to an English-speaking Canadian who had insisted that competence should be the requirement for admission to and promotion within the Civil Service replied, "First of all I want my language to be respected in public places, particularly in federal offices. I am a French Canadian, I am entitled to my language and I want to be able to speak it wherever I think I should, throughout Canada and in everything belonging to Ottawa, and I demand that respect."<sup>33</sup>

Some English-speaking Canadians both recognized and regretted this situation. Some even suggested changes, but the mere thought of bilingualism being officially imposed at this level seemed to cause a feeling of apprehension. Thus in Edmonton a civil servant stated—although in a perfectly cordial tone of voice, that, "If you require me, after 17 years of service in the Civil Service, to pass and write an examination, to speak French, simply to keep my job, I am afraid I will have to emigrate to Australia."

Some people wanted regional administrative services of the federal government to carry on their dealings with people in their own language. This point of view also received some support from English Canadians.

Others, although not as many, put forward similar claims with regard to the provincial administrative services and legislative assemblies. Thus in Rimouski, "I think, however, that French should be made official in every province of Canada if the bicultural character of the country is to be protected, because there are in every province French Canadian minorities and they are entitled to our respect and to our protection. Therefore, if those minorities cannot express themselves clearly in their Parliament, then they are being subjected to a form of slavery—I don't mean the usual kind of slavery, with chains, but a cultural slavery."<sup>34</sup>

#### Transportation

64. Almost everywhere in Quebec people stressed the difficulties French Canadians encounter when they use public transportation—including the nationalized services—to travel across the country. In a French-speaking centre like Rimouski, for instance, people could not understand why the conductors on the Levis train sometimes could not speak French. It was suggested that, "... it be made compulsory in all trans-Canada federal public transportation services, and even international services, for example airlines flying Canadian colors, that employees and members of the crew who deal with the public, should speak the two languages, and in particular on CN trains..."<sup>35</sup> Complaints of this kind were so numerous, so constant and so familiar that nothing would be accomplished by piling quotation on quotation.

65. We must nevertheless record the fact that in various places, and particularly in Quebec, Chicoutimi, Rimouski, London, Kingston, Van-

couver, Victoria as well as at private meetings held in Montreal and Ottawa, French Canadians complained that the armed forces “deliver up French Canadians to English unilingualism.”<sup>36</sup> This was said to be particularly true in the Navy and the Air Force, which were described as ‘almost exclusively English-speaking institutions’;<sup>37</sup> as ‘powerful agents for the progressive anglicization of the serviceman’s family as well as the man himself’;<sup>38</sup> or ‘as English military societies’.<sup>39</sup> According to the people we heard, various factors are responsible for this alleged situation: the old traditions that are still very much alive, the mobility required of the military man who can be called upon to serve in different parts of Canada or even all over the world, and the limited number of French Canadians in the various services. They said this was the cause of a vicious circle, because the fewer the number of French Canadians in the armed services, the more English predominates; while unilingualism in itself keeps French-speaking Canadians from taking up a military career. The Army came in for less criticism, since it has some French Canadian units. When they were confronted with this chapter of grievances, many English Canadians were plainly surprised and sympathetic; others maintained there was just no way to make the armed forces bilingual.

Here as elsewhere in this section we shall go no further than to record the opinions and statements repeated over and over again before the Commission, without making any attempt to check their accuracy for the time being. This is one of the fields our experts will have to study for us with particular care.

66. The question of schools for servicemen’s children was also raised. Thus in Rimouski a participant stated that “Outside the Province of Quebec there is no possibility for a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force to have his children taught in their mother tongue.”<sup>40</sup> In London a soldier said he intended to quit the Army because he did not want his children to “grow up into little Englishmen.”<sup>41</sup> An example of the situation which seems to prevail in the special schools for members of the armed forces outside Quebec was described by a regional school inspector in the following terms, “We do not have very many French families attached to the particular units at . . . [a large camp outside the Province of Quebec] but we have had no problem whatsoever with those who are French-speaking. Now it is true that some of those children come to us speaking very little English, but we have not let that bother us, because we simply let them attach themselves to the classrooms and we are all amazed how quickly they tell our English pupils off, in English. There is no problem as far as this camp is concerned.” At this point part of the audience began to show signs of impatience and one English-speaking participant intervened—according

Schools for  
the children  
of members of  
the armed forces



to him this was nothing more than a brutal form of assimilation. This comment obviously took the inspector by surprise and he made an attempt to justify the situation, "... But the French-speaking people there have not raised it as a problem..."

A federal  
district

67. Throughout the country very few people at the hearings paid much attention to some other particular matters related to the public sector such as the establishment of a federal district for the capital, which some political authorities and observers have been advocating during the past few years. The proposal, as is generally known, would remove a small piece of territory from the control of the provinces, and give it a special status under the authority of the central government. Even though the Commissioners made an effort to elicit a response on this subject, all they received in return were rather evasive replies or polite words of agreement rather than solid expressions of opinion.

#### D) Economic Institutions

English is the  
business  
language

68. Matters relating to the business world attracted even more attention than problems connected with the public service. Here the contrast in views between the English-speaking Canadians and French-speaking Quebecers was dramatic.

To many English-speaking people bilingualism is an impossibility in Canada simply because of economic forces: "We can't do business in two languages . . . we would need two sets of printing . . . then we would have a commercial problem." English being the language of business, it would be logical for English Canadians to remain unilingual: "People do not learn another language unless there are economic and social pressures." "There might be economic advantages in being able to speak French . . . but what about Chinese, Japanese, Russian?"

Some even said they were convinced that sooner or later French Canadian culture would succumb to the dynamic assimilating power of the North American continent. Thus in Saskatoon, "Now, I'll be the first to say that Canada is an English-speaking nation, that our main language of communication is English, and this is what it must be. And I think myself, although I may antagonize my French friends here tonight, that this is something that the French people are going to realize sooner or later, if, for no other reason, because of economic pressures."

Indeed some French-speaking Canadians see the situation in the same light. Thus in Rimouski, "... I think we are getting into an increasingly technical world where we cannot avoid learning English."<sup>42</sup> This opinion was shared by another participant, "In my opinion, even

if the Province of Quebec were legally unilingual, those who want to get on and succeed in life would still have to learn English . . . because business on the North American continent is carried on mostly in English.”<sup>43</sup> In Chicoutimi we were told that, “If I get a job as a technician with the Bell Telephone and want to get to the top then I must speak English because the electronic and electrical instruments come from the United States.”<sup>44</sup>

69. Apart from the language aspect, few French-speaking Canadians claimed to be the victims of flagrant discrimination, although the matters did come up here and there, particularly in Chicoutimi. In St. John’s, the spokesman for a discussion group expressed deep regret for such discriminatory practices as might exist. But in Victoria one participant made a comment on this subject which sounded strange, to say the least, ‘There is no discrimination here for French-speaking people . . . We associate them with farming and tend to look upon them as inferior.’

No overt  
discrimination . . .

Reference was also made on several occasions to the disadvantageous position in which their language placed French Canadians in the matter of competition; “When there are two people,” we were told in Chicoutimi, “with the same level of education, entering one of our factories in Quebec, the English-speaking one has no need to learn a second language to earn his living, whereas the other person has to spend hours, even years mastering the second language . . . The first one can go ahead and improve himself in the technical field and take advantage of the first promotion that comes up, whereas the other one loses time learning a second language.”<sup>45</sup> Or again, “Everyone knows that here [Chicoutimi], where the population is 98 per cent French Canadian, big business has made English the working language and anyone who wants to work his way up at the plant has to use English.”<sup>46</sup>

. . . but a  
disadvantageous  
position . . .

The disadvantages which spring from this situation were conceded by an English-speaking Canadian in Moncton: “The French Canadian is French in his social environment, but not in business. And when he goes to work, he has to work in English accidentally, and he does not know his English well enough to advance equally in the English community and is at present in many cases forced to compete in English terms, which puts him at quite a distinct disadvantage.” Most of the other English-speaking participants were quite silent on this question.

70. After having described the position to which they feel they are relegated in the business world, several French-speaking Canadians went on to denounce it as unjust and intolerable. What struck us on those occasions was that they seemed to have the support of the entire audience. Thus in Chicoutimi, “. . . there is great injustice towards

. . . which is  
unjust and  
intolerable

French Canadians where earning a living is concerned. This injustice must be corrected, and in factories the working language should be the language of the majority of the workers which, in the case of Quebec workers, probably means that the working language should be French."<sup>47</sup> "In every country of the world," said another participant, "where a nation has taken over control of its future and its national, political and economic life, then all the industrial and business activities within the country are carried on in the language of that nation . . . I do not believe that the French Canadian is an inferior being . . ."<sup>48</sup>

On several occasions Quebecers denounced the status of an "economically colonized people" of which French Canadians, they said, bear the stigma. They stressed that French Canadians must become the masters of their own economy. And it is not small compromises they want, but a radical reform of the whole system. "I don't blame the English," one participant said in Chicoutimi, "I blame the system that turns us into slaves."<sup>49</sup>

#### Ambiguities

71. Is the "system" regarded as being mostly an English-Quebec one, an English Canadian one, or a North American one? As we shall point out later on, some French Canadians attached great importance to the "privileged" position of Quebec's English-speaking minority. But very few mentioned the often dominant role that American interests or American capital play in Quebec as well as in other parts of Canada. The reiterated contrast between "master" and "servant" always conjured up an image of a collective personage—"the English". Thus a Sherbrooke participant stated, "English capitalism is to blame for it."<sup>50</sup> "All we are doing here is making the English rich,"<sup>51</sup> a Chicoutimi man maintained. In Sherbrooke people complained about "the domination of the English over the French."<sup>52</sup> In Quebec some of the discussion groups explored this theme at length without ever bringing out the easily ascertained and essential fact that the "English-speaking" economic institutions are far from being all owned by Canadian capitalists, and that the evil they are talking about actually is often American "domination". Even the separatists were unable to tell us how they proposed to "rectify" a situation whose causes are so complex and often so far removed from their control. Basically it seemed to us that the French Canadians who attended our meetings mainly wanted to put on the record their indignation at their "economic weakness" in a province where they are in the majority, and that some of them were consequently inclined to underestimate the importance of the American "presence".

#### The future

Questions were raised as to whether French Canadians could participate in their own language in major economic enterprises. For many the Manicouagan example was conclusive proof; "Shipshaw was built



in English, but Hydro has just built Manicouagan in French,"<sup>53</sup> someone stated proudly in Chicoutimi.\* Or again: "Thanks to Hydro we are now sellers and can command respect!"<sup>54</sup>

72. These ideas of how things should be changed, which French Canadians put forward very forcefully and with remarkable unanimity, were not the ones which occupied the attention of English-speaking Canadians at the regional meetings, even those who were constantly trying to find out '*What does Quebec want?*' You might have thought that the latter would have already heard about and discussed these grievances, which seemed to be the very ones French-speaking Quebecers were expressing most vigorously. What is the reason for this almost total silence?

The reason, it appeared to us, was to be found in two facts: first, the picture of Quebec society held by a large number of English-speaking people; and secondly, the opinion they have of the Quebec educational system.

73. Some English-speaking Canadians, despite the fact that they had lived in Quebec or travelled through it, freely spoke about a "quaint old Quebec"—apparently that was all they had seen of it, or at least all they had retained. Others spoke of the industrialization of the province as something to come in the future. "Industry is going to enter the province. And these people in Quebec will have to adapt themselves to these new conditions" (Kingston). The image of an environment that is still rural was nearly always joined with that of a backward people, "Quebec has emphasized a rather peasant-like culture—one which amuses rather than educates" (Kingston). In Vancouver we were told that, "Quebec . . . is fifty years behind the times"; in Calgary, "The Church's influence in Quebec is holding back education and industrial development" and in London, "French Canada is committed to the nineteenth century ideal." In answer to a question put to them, a lively and highly intelligent group of Vancouver high school students replied, "yes", Quebec "is still" 75 per cent rural. This illustrated perfectly a thought we heard at the other end of the country, in Halifax, "We are made to think in stereotypes: for instance, that Quebec is rural."

To sum up then, in almost all the English-speaking provinces a large proportion of people still think of Quebec as an archaic, rural society.

These opinions caught the Commissioners' attention, because in the first place, the fact of the matter is that Quebec has never been the most rural province in Canada; it is also a fact that urbanization and industrialization have been taking place there at a steady, at times very rapid pace; that the majority of the population has been living in cities since 1921; and finally that Quebec today is more urbanized than Canada

Silence on the part of English-speaking Canadians

Quebec, "a rural and backward" society

An error of fact

\*The Shipshaw power plant belongs to ALCAN; the Manicouagan dam is being built by Hydro-Quebec.



as a whole.\* French Canadians, moreover, constantly stressed this fact during the meetings held in Quebec. Indeed, many of the problems they raised were related to developments in a highly urbanized and industrialized society; in many cases, as we saw earlier, they were in fact a direct consequence of urbanization and industrialization. People who belonged to an archaic and rural society would have used a different vocabulary and formulated different grievances.

But a great many English-speaking Canadians could not discuss these problems, since they did not know they existed; the picture they had of Quebec was quite out of date.

74. Others built up an all-embracing case against Quebec's educational system. They felt they were being put on trial by the manner in which the Quebecers were laying their complaints, and they took the offensive themselves.

"We [English-speaking Canadians] are blamed for their self-imposed backwardness"—this cutting remark by a participant in London gives an indication of the tone of such criticism. In Yarmouth we were told that, "Much of Quebec's problem is due to her education system" and in Saskatoon, "Education in Quebec is not as good as elsewhere in Canada." In Calgary a participant maintained that this is because "The Church has held Quebec back."

Thus, in English-speaking Canada the explanation most commonly advanced for the "inequalities" or "injustices" Quebec suffers in the fields of business and the public service was the "backward character" of its education.

Here the Quebec participants were the ones to keep silent. Their silence was all the more remarkable since for a number of years education has been one of the subjects that has aroused the widest interest and public discussion in the province and since it is now undergoing fundamental reforms.

And so it seemed that in certain given situations some English-speaking and some French-speaking Canadians had well worked out theories upon which they could fall back at will and with which each felt himself safe. For example, French Canadians complained that their language and members of their group are badly treated in large Quebec companies. To which English-speaking Canadians replied

\*In 1871 the urban population amounted to 19.6 p.c. for the whole of Canada and 22.8 p.c. for Quebec. In 1921 the figures were 45.3 and 51.0 p.c. respectively. Thus for at least the past 43 years the greater part of the province's population has been urban. This majority has now reached approximately three-quarters of the population, to be precise, 74.3 p.c. (and 71.1 p.c. for French-speaking Quebec). Only Ontario is slightly more urbanized (77.3 p.c.), the average for Canada being 69.6 per cent.

It should be noted that in each Census prior to 1956, the definition of the word "urban" included the inhabitants of all incorporated villages, towns and cities in the country; only the population of strictly agricultural regions was registered as "rural". Since 1956, the definition of the two words has become narrower. But this holds for the whole country, and consequently does not invalidate the proportions given above.

Needless to say the Commission does not want to identify the agricultural way of life with "backward" populations. It is not making a value judgment, merely recording a fact.

that this was due to the type of education Quebec had adopted. Each side took refuge behind the walls of its own point of view and refused to venture out.

#### E) French-speaking minorities and the English-speaking minority in Quebec

75. During these debates the people who took part in the meetings frequently brought up the matter of the French minorities, and, to a lesser extent, the question of the English minority in Quebec.

Problems of the  
French-speaking

Representatives of the French-speaking minorities told us just how thoroughly English permeates their lives. Many young people in particular appear to be tempted to give in to the attraction of that language. This situation seems to prevail even in New Brunswick where, as we were told in Moncton, "Despite the progress made, thanks to the effort of the Acadian elite, many young people take no pride at all in the French language... they prefer to speak English at all times... and consider it a disadvantage to be French."<sup>55</sup> On the whole, however, we came to the conclusion that the spokesmen for the French minorities had faith in the survival of French culture in spite of the obstacles that are sometimes put in its way. The participants also expressed the hope that the English-speaking majority would co-operate in the efforts aimed at improving this position in all the provinces. Several of them told us that considerable progress has been made in that direction in recent years. The research services of the Commission will give a high priority to the examination of these problems.

It seemed to us that the attitudes of these representatives towards Quebec were rather ambivalent. On the one hand they were shocked at the radical positions being adopted in that province and wondered whether Quebec support was not failing them just when it would have been most useful. One Acadian outlined his fears in the following way, 'It used to be there was only one superiority complex in Canada—the one that belonged to the English. Now there are two, the English one, and the one of the French Canadians in Quebec.'<sup>56</sup> Some people also expressed the fear that the separatist upheavals and the flood of angry talk against Confederation issuing from Quebec might provoke a hardening against the French minorities in other provinces.

On the other hand, we discovered here and there echoes of the Quebec "awakening". Thus in Moncton, "It's true there is a good understanding here in New Brunswick. I would just as soon myself it didn't exist because it is a little too much like the good understanding that exists between master and servant. The price of this good under-

Quebec and  
the minorities

standing has been the tameness of the Acadian people. I think that tameness has gone on long enough . . . There's a very acute problem here and I think the situation is going to explode."<sup>57</sup> But this kind of observation was exceptional.

While the representatives of the French minorities considered Quebec's presence and assistance to be essential to their own survival, we observed that the Quebec participants were very undecided and substantially divided in their opinion as to their province's responsibility towards these minorities.

Some speakers adopted the traditional stance according to which Quebec supports "her" minorities as far as her policy of autonomy allows her to do so, and these people maintained that French-speaking Quebec must continue to act as leader. Thus in Sherbrooke, "In demanding changes to the constitution should we not ask ourselves—we the French Canadians of Quebec—what sacrifices we are prepared to make for the French minorities of other provinces?"<sup>58</sup> Some people established a link between this role and the strengthening of Quebec's position within Confederation, thus, 'We shall have greater influence and shall be better able to help the other minorities.'<sup>59</sup>

Some Quebecers, noting that general interest in the fate of the French minorities was slipping, looked for a way to excuse the fact, explaining it by the magnitude of the problems to be faced within the province itself.

Others thought the future of the French minorities was in considerable danger and a few said so plainly, not to say brutally: according to them, Quebec must not jeopardize her own existence to "save" groups which in most cases are condemned to disappear very shortly anyway, mainly because the English majority in other provinces refuses to give them the means to survive (French schools and television, the practical application of bilingualism, and so on). The separatists who spoke at the regional meetings were not the only ones to reason along these lines but they were more articulate in the expression of their views. Some of them no doubt felt that the position of the French minorities could in fact be strengthened rather than weakened by the establishment of an independent Quebec as long as 'each group would be able to ensure the survival of its minority within the other.'<sup>60</sup> But for others, the French minorities were just one "minority among others" and in Quebec City we were told that the only future for those minorities was to "accept the fate they themselves have chosen . . . and to integrate with the majority, just as English Canadians here should logically expect to integrate to a certain extent with the French Canadian majority."<sup>61</sup>

Few reactions  
among the  
English-  
speaking

Among Quebecers who were less pessimistic, and particularly concerning the case of the numerically strong minorities close to Quebec,



we were told that the future of these French groups mostly depended on the attitude of the English-speaking majorities in the various provinces.

As it happened, our English-speaking participants very rarely referred to the problem of the French minorities as a whole. They were more interested in examining specific matters—we have already outlined their opinions—and above all the problem of bilingual or French schools. When they did touch on the subject it was usually to express their satisfaction, 'Yes, we do have some French Canadians here, but we don't have any problem.' Or when they admitted that certain problems did exist they would plead ignorance about the French Canadians' situation. Some of them seemed to look upon French Canadians simply as "one minority among others".

76. Quebecers, on the other hand, emphatically stated the opinion that their province offers its nine partners an example which they ought to follow. Thus in Chicoutimi, "If I have any advice to give, it is that the minorities in the West, the Maritimes and Ontario should be treated in the same way as the English minorities have been treated in the Province of Quebec since Confederation."<sup>62</sup> Even outside Quebec many French-speaking and some English-speaking Canadians used the same argument. However, these appeals to "equity" failed to impress some of the other participants. Thus, in Saskatoon, one speaker had this to say in reply, "I have heard it said that the French in Saskatchewan should have equal rights with the English in Quebec. Perhaps, but they are not in the majority and our constitution doesn't say that they should have rights in all provinces." We might take this opportunity to point out that on various occasions the fact that the constitution is silent on one or another aspect of the language problem was taken to mean that in the British North America Act anything which is not explicitly provided for is thereby automatically forbidden.

Our French-speaking participants, however, referred time and again to the "privileged" position of the English minority in Quebec society. According to the former, even in centres where the latter make up a tiny minority, most English-speaking Canadians live in a social world of their own, apart from the French-speaking community. Relations between the two social groups were said to be neither good nor bad—simply not to exist. Thus, in Chicoutimi, someone said with a spirit that we cannot hope to reproduce in writing, "We get along alright? Oh, sure, certainly we do, like a family where the son-in-law never sees his mother-in-law."<sup>63</sup>

According to some French Canadian participants, not only does the economic system protect the English-speaking minority in Quebec to the point where it can prosper in splendid isolation, but English-speaking newcomers to Quebec live there as if not a thing had changed in

The English-speaking minority in Quebec

A privileged position



their lives; by being identified with one of the sectors of the dominant system they immediately become part of what even the French Canadians look upon as the managing group; and again, they are members of a self-contained community from the moment they arrive. The armed forces were often cited as an example. It was said that whereas the French units in other provinces are incorporated into English units, in Quebec, on the contrary, the English-speaking military personnel have their own network of institutions and live in that province as if they were in a foreign country. Thus, in Chicoutimi, we were told that, "Some of the servicemen at Bagotville are as foreign to the area as if they were Russians."<sup>64</sup>

Replies of  
certain  
English-  
speaking  
Canadians

Some English-speaking participants said that it was not as easy as all that for English Canadians to live in Quebec. They quoted numerous examples of English-speaking families who had been unable to adapt to the social environment there and had left as soon as they were able to. English-speaking Canadians feel that the French Canadians' strong cultural defence mechanism, which drives them to isolate themselves from everything that is English, is an obstacle to their integration into Quebec society.

#### F) Attitudes towards the language problem

A choice or  
a necessity

77. We gained the impression from the regional meetings that the English-speaking participants did not have the same concept of the function and influence of the second language as the French-speaking participants. The former saw in the French language essentially a form of cultural enrichment, whereas the latter looked upon English as a tool of practical necessity.

English-speaking Canadians, particularly a group of London students who expressed themselves with great conviction, mainly stressed the cultural benefits which are to be gained from the study of French. Certainly some English people recognized that it could also lead to tangible advantages such as stronger national unity and even to financial gain.

But all this was far removed from the dilemma outlined by one participant in Chicoutimi, "I learnt to think in French, I learnt how to manage a business in French and I learnt how to draw in French, but when I walk into a factory they ask me, 'Mister, do you speak English?' In other words I learnt everything I know in French but I am forced to earn my living in English."<sup>65</sup> Another participant in Chicoutimi explained that the advanced training he was getting at a technical institute was making him a stranger to French culture; "I am still a student and I can tell you that books on accountancy are

still in English, so we are trained in English . . . So I think an entire generation needs to be educated in French by teaching it to think in French, and above all by teaching it the technical terms it has to know."<sup>66</sup>

78. The differences of opinion between English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians with regard to the means that should be used to remedy the situation appeared to us to be the result of the different points of view they held concerning the possibilities of bilingualism in Canada.

Bilingualism  
or dual  
unilingualism?

In this respect it was the English-speaking Canadians who showed the most confidence in the curative powers of bilingualism. Their attitude seemed to be based on their common conviction—outlined earlier—that through force of circumstance, most French Canadians already know English.

Consequently, some English-speaking Canadians, in order to correct the present situation, stated that they would learn French and above all have it taught to their children in school—in this way they conceived that the burden of bilingualism would no longer be borne by the French Canadians alone. Thus the eagerness of so many English-speaking Canadians to study ways and means of promoting the teaching of French becomes readily understandable. As far as they are concerned this is the key to the problems that exist between the two main ethnic groups.

On the other hand, Quebec, as we noted earlier, was far more reserved in its attitude towards bilingualism. We felt that this was partly due to the participants' conviction that up to now French Canadians alone had carried the load of bilingualism in Canada. Hence the opinion expressed by a citizen of Chicoutimi: "From the point of view of bilingualism, I think only French Canadians are bilingual."<sup>67</sup> The fact that English-speaking Canadians say they want to learn French, that they want French to be taught in the English schools, does not impress French Canadians. Most of them have at one time or another met "English people" ['Anglais'] who said how much they regretted not knowing French and how they hoped that at least their children would speak it some day. But according to the French Canadians, 'nothing has come of it as yet—and why should things be any different today?'\* It seemed to us that this scepticism resulted from the conviction (an unjustified conviction as will be seen presently) that most English-speaking Canadians in Quebec stubbornly refuse to learn French. Thus, in Kingston, a French Canadian student from Montreal stated that his city is, "after all, the second biggest French-speaking city in the world and where English Canadians—up to 95 per cent of them don't speak a word of French and they don't want to learn."

\*According to the federal Census of 1961 the bilingual population of British origin amounted to 4 p.c. of the total group. It will be seen a bit later on that the percentage is quite different in Quebec.

If this then is the case in Quebec where English-speaking Canadians live side by side with French culture in their everyday life, how is one to believe that the "English" in other provinces could ever become bilingual?

An error  
of fact

79. But is this really the case? The 1961 Census describes a situation very different from this stereotype. In fact, according to official statistics, 28.7 per cent of these Quebecers of British origin are bilingual whereas only 24.4 per cent of those of French descent know the two languages. In the metropolitan area of Montreal, although there are considerably fewer English-speaking bilingual people (26.9 per cent) than French-speaking (41 per cent) the figure is nevertheless impressive. Undoubtedly the "bilingualism" referred to in the Census is a self-awarded certificate and undoubtedly a good proportion of the "bilinguals" have only a rudimentary knowledge of the second language, but this observation applies equally to the French as it does to the English.\*

Other themes

If our French-language participants had been aware of these statistics would they still have been as sceptical of the future of bilingualism in Canada? Perhaps they would. For instance, some of them told us that in general people are not bilingual from inclination but out of necessity; that this is the case for French Canadians; that, in Quebec, in particular, but also in New Brunswick, many French people who are officially bilingual are actually only so to a limited degree. Finally, it was pointed out that apart from the Montreal area, a great many French Canadians in Quebec speak only French. According to the Census they represent 82.7 per cent of the population. On those grounds some people, in an attempt to draw a logical conclusion from their picture of the language situation in Canada, were in favour of establishing two unilingual areas in the country. Thus, in Quebec City, "I recommend English unilingualism for the English Canadian nation as a guarantee of its cultural and linguistic homogeneity, and I recommend French unilingualism for the Quebec nation as a guarantee of its national survival..."<sup>88</sup>

Attitudes of  
the English-  
speaking about  
French

80. At our regional meetings very few people openly expressed contempt for the quality of the French spoken in Canada, but underlying certain comments there were obvious allusions to the prejudice about "Parisian French". In the course of conversation, however, people assured us that in certain English-speaking circles there is still a considerable hostility towards anything that "smells" French. Anyone who speaks French still runs the risk of this kind of insult—"Speak white"; "Why don't you speak a white man's language?"; "If you want to speak French, go back to your province"; or simply "Why don't you speak English?". A person from the suburbs of London told us she had been

\*A general table of bilingual people:—Cf. Appendix V.



treated as a "DP" because she spoke French. We were assured that these were the reactions of individual fanatics who are becoming less numerous all the time. Unfortunately these insults wound the people who are their victims and these incidents are reported over and over again by the people who witness them.

Some participants also underlined that in Canada French does enjoy a lower prestige than English, which is the dominant language in business, in society and in politics.

81. In all the discussions about relationships between our institutions and our languages, ignorance and prejudice often went hand in hand with the most obvious expression of good will. In many cases, without a common wave length, no dialogue was possible.

Divergences

Thus, while English-speaking Canadians together with the spokesmen for the French-speaking minorities dwelt at length on the teaching of French, their concern in this area picked up only a faint echo in the Quebec centres we visited. On the other hand, French-speaking Canadians in Quebec manifested abundantly their worry and annoyance about what they consider to be their precarious situation in the business world. To this most English-speaking Canadians merely replied that in North America the rules of the game establish the supremacy of the English language. As for the participants who specifically expressed the views of other ethnic groups, debates of this kind usually left them completely at a loss. At the same time as they were claiming the rights of their languages and cultures to a place in the sun many of them seemed confused by the manner in which English-speaking and even more French-speaking Canadians formulated the problem.









82. Broad concepts of Canada, the role of institutions in the life of languages and cultures—these have been the topics of the two preceding chapters. Now we must see how the interaction of these general concepts and these experiences of life, already so closely linked, gave rise to extremely varied political attitudes, whatever the actual party affiliation of the people who spoke to us.

Introduction

This process, which we watched with the greatest interest, went on in two ways. On the one hand participants examined certain social and economic problems to which they proposed solutions, thereby expressing their political views. On the other hand, they voiced opinions on the way in which democracy works in Canada, in relation to the “rule of the majority” or the “rights of the minorities”.

The points of view which were expressed before the Commission on these two aspects of the problem again, in our opinion, show that the gulf between French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians is growing wider.

### A) Political choices

83. The positions which French Canadians took when they met us ranged from moderately reforming in spirit to complete separatism. There were many intermediate points of view and they are not easy to classify, for often people passed imperceptibly from one shade of opinion to another. Once again, then, we will be forced to use rather arbitrary categories—except for the separatists, whose opinions are clear cut.

All shades of opinion

A number of people who were speaking to us raised the questions summarized in the preceding chapter, but this time from a political point of view: French minorities, bilingualism within the federal Civil Service, the armed forces, and the transportation system, more complete coverage by French radio and television networks, the role of the French language and of French-speaking Canadians in the Quebec economy, and so on. They sometimes asked that the equality of the two official languages be put into practice and formally written into the constitution. To some, this bilingualism meant even the recognition of unilingual geographical regions.

“Moderate” reformers

Others made the same demands but at the same time they were concerned about another aspect of the problem. According to them, it is necessary that the division of responsibilities between the federal government and the provinces be redefined and truly respected; either these readjustments should take place within the framework of the present constitution (for example, making use of the opting out formula) or by means of amendments to the BNA Act. The preference



seemed to run to the latter choice, for the French Canadians, during our meetings, often tended to express their opinions in constitutional terms.

The "special status"

This position is already very close to that of the French-speaking people who demanded a "special status" for Quebec. Those who hold this point of view accept the continuance of the federal system for Canada and consequently the maintenance of very important powers in the central government, but they demand major amendments to the BNA Act, if not a complete revision of the constitution. The goal to be achieved was expressed more exactly than the means by which it might be obtained: it was a question of having Quebec officially recognized as "a province not like the others", one which is the fatherland of the French Canadian "nation", and as such, a province which should be given special powers.

Associate states

A more recent and better known concept, that of associate states, was mentioned in Quebec but was never clearly defined for us. Evidently, in this case, the federal system is abandoned for a confederal system in the strict sense of the word, for this idea seemed to imply a whole new political framework: an association of two semi-independent states, one consisting of Quebec and the other of the rest of Canada, crowned by a federal council with very limited powers.

Separatism

84. The clearest and most radical political attitude expressed before the Commission, of course, was that of the separatists or militant "indépendantistes". It was also the attitude which English-speaking participants appeared to be most familiar with and which they attacked most vigorously, although they did not always fully understand it.

The "indépendantiste" position was clearly expressed in Quebec. At the evening meeting, a lawyer told us: "We do not blame the English Canadians for anything; they have behaved as all majorities do. What we want is much simpler than that. We want complete fiscal powers in order to put into effect these political powers, so that we may organize our institutions and finally attain the full development of the French Canadian nation." According to this separatist, "If the Commission were to come to the conclusion that co-existence is in fact impossible or that the two nations do not want it, it could do what we lawyers do in similar situations: we recommend to married couples who cannot get along that they part for awhile and arrange their lives separately . . ."<sup>69</sup>

A common ground

Thus the views expressed before the Commission in Quebec were very diverse, and at times contradictory. Such opposite opinions may seem somewhat astonishing. Yet probably the most surprising fact of all was that such different ideas had a common denominator: they expressed a wide and deep dissatisfaction with the present political position and a manifest will to conduct an earnest search for—and

make a thorough examination of—many possible roads, which almost all went in the direction of more or less radical reforms.

85. The response of some English-speaking participants to separatism was equally clear and vigorous: “let them go”. Both Quebec separatism and these extreme responses from English-speaking Canadians had a real attraction in that they appeared to provide a simple and clear-cut solution to a difficult and complex situation. Those who said “let us separate” and those who said “let them go” often expressly mentioned the simplicity and apparent logic of their solution as proof of its inevitability.

English-speaking  
Canadian  
militant reaction

Among other English Canadians there were strong reactions to the idea of separating Quebec from the rest of the country. Thus, in Yarmouth, a citizen issued the warning that “If Quebec thinks for one minute that we—the rest of Canada, possibly 12 or 13 million—are going to let the Province of Quebec set up a state within a state, take away a third of our population and a quarter of our wealth, they’ve got another thing coming.” Another man in Kingston ascribed separatist sentiment in Quebec to “a regression to a form of nationalism which is really an anachronism” and he suggested that, “If Quebec wants to withdraw they should be free to do so; the rest of us might form a union party who, . . . would approach the United States and ask to be taken in.” And, in Sudbury, another man similarly claimed, “I represent an organization that states quite bluntly and simply that any more concessions other than [those] in the law today. . . given to French Canada, and we . . . will have no alternative than to organize the working people . . . to take us into the country to the south.”

There were others who were inclined to see the “indépendantiste” position as aggravating but localized. One Maritimer candidly observed, “The only province we have trouble with is Quebec.” This point of view was particularly prevalent in regions of Canada more distant from Quebec, and it recurred in Western Canada where discussants repeatedly questioned the relevance to the whole country of the issues under study by the Commission.

“A Quebec  
problem”

86. Another response we often encountered dismissed separatism as being economically impractical. Participants stated that French-speaking and English-speaking Canada are so inter-related economically that separatism is simply not a realistic alternative. They were not dissuaded by others—usually in the same meeting—who pointed out that, although the Canadian and American economies are closely meshed, English-speaking Canadians are willing to pay the price of independence from the United States. They suggested that French Quebec might also be willing to pay a similar price for independence from the rest of Canada.

“Economically  
impractical”

Political  
manoeuvring?

Still other speakers ascribed the situation entirely to political manoeuvring, suggesting that all concerned were being led astray by "politicians". They in turn were countered by persons who denied any political implications other than those arising from a desire for economic emancipation, and suggested that if the economic imbalance could be righted the disagreements would be resolved.

In general we met with a good deal of confusion in the minds of English-speaking as well as of French-speaking participants as to the economic and political aspects of separatism. Among the separatists themselves, some implied that independence would bring with it economic progress, while others said they were ready to accept some economic sacrifice for the sake of political independence. But all separatists joined in denouncing in a general way "economic colonialism" in Quebec.

A vicious  
circle

Participants sometimes feared that extreme English Canadian views about Quebec would feed separatist sentiment. They felt that many of the people in that province who were discontented but were still seeking moderate solutions might be pushed over the brink. Thus, in Vancouver, a young man exploded, after hearing a number of statements hostile to Quebec, "I would like to remind [you] that every time you insult the French Canadians you create thousands more separatists." Another youth in Chicoutimi seemed to prove this point when he loudly instructed the Commission: "You will tell those gentlemen in Ottawa that the new generation in Quebec is no longer influenced by the two-hour battle which took place on the Plains of Abraham... what interests and what gives great dignity to French Canadian youth at the present time is that they are taking the steps necessary to enable them to look after their own affairs." He finally concluded, "The future of French Canada is not in Confederation but in the independence of Quebec!"<sup>70</sup>

"National  
unity"

87. However, equally forceful but more positive statements were made by others in English-speaking Canada. "I don't find these remarks about separatism amusing" said a university professor in Ontario, "and I don't accept them." Criticizing people who take adamant stands on both sides, and those who do not treat the issues seriously, he went on to say, "I don't think there are many Kingstonians who are prepared even to entertain the idea, much less to accept it, that the present solution for the present troubles of our country can be found in the break-up of Confederation, or in the disruption of our nation. For myself, I think I am a moderate man on most civic and national issues, but on the issue of national unity I am not moderate at all. For me the preservation and strengthening of a national unity must come first if Canada as a nation, and a bicultural nation, must endure and grow!"



The same deep concern for national unity was expressed time and again by English-speaking Canadians.

Another point of view expressing both sympathy with French Canada and a desire for national unity was heard in Victoria, where a man told the meeting: "It's a case of statehood and nationhood; [French Canadians] believe that in Canada today we only have statehood: boundaries, borders, sovereignty to legislature, etc. What they want is a separate nation that gives them common aspirations in religion and in their mutual goals. Somehow I don't blame them for this, but at the same time I wish they would make some attempt to make this Confederation of ours work." This kind of response revealed some of the curiosity, frustration, and even anguish the Commission encountered in predominantly English-speaking meetings when the possibility of any kind of separation came up.

88. Many English-speaking participants emphasized the Canadian dimension of the problem, as did a woman in London who said: "Canada is a marriage of two nations and it was not a shotgun marriage, it was a free and deliberate marriage. Now that a divorce is in the offing, I think this is a problem for the whole family, and it is time that all the family get together to improve the situation of the family. . . it is an intense national problem."

"A national problem"

Still others suggested a "cooling-off" period in which a calmer inspection of the issues might reveal that the divisions were not as deep as they appeared. A man in Fredericton suggested for example, "Let's set the things down and let's step back and work at it a little while. . . Let those of us on the English-speaking side be prepared to give those on the French-speaking side a clear hard guarantee. Let us give them proof that we are not as bad as we appear to be; then, we on our side, may find out that they are not nearly as bad as we thought they were in the last few months due to the actions of their friends in Quebec."

89. In addition to those who suggested a "cooling-off" period and those who accepted the problem as fully Canadian in scope, there were others prepared to consider fairly sweeping changes. In Victoria, for example, "A conference on equal partnership to draw up a new constitution" was suggested as the only solution, "because Canada is and must be recognized as a bi-national state." In Yarmouth, as a solution to the "problem of two nations within one state", it was proposed that Canadians consider "the abolition, if you wish, of the BNA Act and the bringing down of a strictly Canadian constitution passed and accepted by the Canadian Parliament."

Reformists

A less specific suggestion was made in Halifax where it was seen possible to have a "loyalty to Nova Scotia and to Canada, [or] a loyalty to Quebec and to Canada." The speaker went on to say, "We have both



loyalties and I think we should try to maintain that situation in a federal country to have the maximum amount of freedom within each region to run their own affairs the way they want them run."

This last idea was discussed by many English-speaking participants in Commission meetings who were in favour of greater provincial autonomy and power, and thus were sympathetic to the drive for autonomy in Quebec. Here, however, a distinction must be made, since in Quebec the drive appeared to be associated with ideas such as that of 'two nations' and was buttressed by cultural and linguistic factors. The English-speaking Canadians appeared rather to be expressing a preference for government based on provincial decentralization.

A summary

90. What we have recounted so far in this chapter might leave the impression that the political thinking of English-speaking participants amounted chiefly to a definition of attitudes in the face of Quebec separatism. Such a conclusion would be plainly unwarranted. However, in the Commission's meetings, it was this aspect of the problem that a number of them spontaneously thought about and wanted to discuss. To them the question was new and challenging, and that is undoubtedly why they accorded such importance to it. Perhaps it is also the reason why most of them expressed no very clear ideas as to what reforms could be brought about in the present political system.

## B) Ideas on democracy

91. Various political changes were proposed at the regional meetings. What did they mean in terms of democracy?

A game of numbers

In all these discussions the question was largely formulated in terms of "majority rule" and the rights of minorities. Participants whether to support a personal viewpoint or to refute a position imputed to others, frequently engaged in a game of numbers and percentages related to the demographic characteristics of the Canadian population. Very often, indeed, they expressed their views on democracy in Canada in numerical terms.

English-speaking persons declared their conviction that in a democratic form of government the majority must rule. Thus, in Victoria, it was suggested that, "The minority should have to walk in the moccasins of the majority." And, in Halifax, the same majority rule approach was put forcefully by a man who was roundly applauded when he said: "I think I am on proper grounds when I say that 13 million people in Canada speak English and some 5 million speak French. I think the tail is trying to swing the dog."

One phenomenon should be noted: many of those who developed the argument for majority rule tended to reduce considerably the actual proportion of citizens of French origin in Canada, which in the 1961 Census was 28.1 per cent according to language and 30.4 per cent according to ethnic origin. We put a question about this proportion to some of them privately: they reduced the French-speaking citizens to 10 or 12 per cent of the population, and thus it was apparent that to them the latter seemed scarcely more important than other ethnic minorities. It need not be added that these incorrect proportions could only reinforce their views about the supreme position of the majority.

92. Quite often, as well, the idea of simple majority rule was expressed in terms of provinces, with Quebec seen as one of ten equal units comprising the country. "Canada is at the moment a federation of ten equalities", stated a man in Newfoundland "and Quebec of course is one of ten equalities." Relating this to the idea of "equal partnership" expressed in the Commission's terms of reference, the same speaker felt "some justification" in asking, "Are you taking the one which is one of ten and setting it off against a combination of the nine others which are the English provinces?" Likewise, in Fredericton, the Commission was told bluntly: "To assume that the Province of Quebec is equal to the other nine provinces will not be accepted." At the other end of the country in Victoria a man introduced a resolution to the public meeting which proposed, "That Canada as a nation of ten provinces and of many racial origins, but having an English-speaking majority of nine provinces, must recognize the English language as the nationally accepted language of Canada." This resolution was not even seconded, let alone discussed further by the meeting.

Variations  
on the same  
theme

Those who thought of majority rule in terms of ten provinces often tended to reduce the population of Quebec, consciously or otherwise, to a tenth of the population, and to identify French Canada almost entirely with Quebec. "The French Canadians are confined, by and large, to a single province" (Calgary). And since, according to these people, this is the case, it follows that the "Canadian crisis" is hardly a large one, or, again, that it affects only one province. These people were astonished to learn that more than a third of the population of New Brunswick is French-speaking and that there are significant groups of French-speaking Canadians to be found in other provinces.

To emphasize the force of the argument for majority rule some speakers claimed in our hearing that the French population has been decreasing continuously since 1867. Actually the Census reports since 1871 show that this is not true. The proportion of citizens of French

origin has proved to be remarkably stable, 31 in 1871 and 30.4 in 1961, and this in spite of continuing immigration.\*

The following statement was made before the Commisison during the preliminary hearing in Ottawa: "When Confederation came about, the population of Canada was over 50 per cent French-speaking. At this time, a hundred years later, there are approximately 30 per cent French-speaking." The witness drew his own conclusions from this supposed drop in the proportion: "What is it going to be a hundred years from now if there is only going to be 10 or 20 per cent of the French population? Why should there be equal representation, equal this, equal that, when the odds are 35 to 15 or 30 to 20 per cent. We have to think of the future, not just as it is today." It should be pointed out that some French-speaking Canadians, pessimistic as to the future of French Canadians within the framework of Confederation, also had a picture of their group in constant proportionate decline since 1867, and drew their own political conclusions. Thus we were told at Chicoutimi: "Confederation did not give us our rights when we were 60 per cent [in 1867]; do you think they will give them back to us in 1971 when, according to statistics, we shall be only 18 per cent?"<sup>71</sup>

We might note in passing that this person apparently expects the proportion of French Canadians in the whole population to decrease by 12 per cent—which is to say, a decrease of the order of 40 per cent for the group itself—an opinion which it is not pertinent to discuss here.

"A problem":  
the concentration  
of French  
Canadians in  
Quebec

93. Others expressed the opinion that the concentration of French-speaking Canadians in Quebec, where they are in the majority, creates a problem for the general application of majority rule in Canada. As a "solution" to this "problem", thought by some to be "the basic problem of Confederation", one participant in Saskatoon proposed the destruction of the "French-speaking island": "Why not disperse them throughout Canada?" At Calgary another participant set forth the same point of view, but he phrased his sentence conditionally: "If all 5½ million of them were spread as evenly as I imagine the Germans, the Dutch, or the Ukrainians to be, then I don't think we would

\*During this whole period only one important variation is to be noted, between 1871 and 1921, when the proportion reached its lowest level, 27.9 p.c., a drop of 3.2 p.c. which was almost wiped out later. This refers to Canadians of French origin.

Classification according to *mother tongue* was only started in 1931. In this instance it reveals, for a shorter period, of course, very similar proportions to the ones we have just seen. This may be observed from the following table, which gives, for the last four federal census periods, the percentage of Canadians whose mother tongue is French.

1931—27.30 p.c.
1941—29.16 p.c.
1951—29.04 p.c.
1961—28.09 p.c.

These classifications according to ethnic origin and mother tongue (like those according to "official language") are briefly explained at the beginning of Appendix V.



be having the same problem.” Of course the magnitude of the French-speaking minority is forgotten here; even dispersal would not diminish the fact that 30 per cent of the Canadian population is of French origin.

94. Although viewing political reality in a straight-forward majority rule manner and apparently enjoying the game of numbers, many English-speaking participants nevertheless expressed their conviction that the majority must be sympathetic to the minority, and should be willing to make concessions. Indeed many advanced the view that the English people in Canada had been very generous towards minorities, and specially towards the French minority. Some qualifications, however, were added to such statements. We were warned, for example, about possible changes of behaviour in the future. Thus, in Vancouver, we were told: “As a majority we can afford to make concessions; however . . . the English-speaking element shouldn’t be pushed too far because there would be resistance.”

Concessions,  
up to a point

95. Underlying this “majority rule” idea of political reality in Canada was a feeling that the rights of the individual are the cornerstone of democracy and, as a corollary, there was a tendency to play down collective rights, such as those claimed by “nations”. In Kingston, for example, the Commission was told, “Canada, I don’t think for many of us has very much meaning, nor has ‘the Canadian’; but *a Canadian*—the individual—has his rights and his obligations. Canada and Quebec are abstractions; ‘an English-speaking’ or ‘French-speaking’ Canadian is real, concrete. Their freedom is of supreme importance.” Most important, however, was the inference in this majoritarian view—so often apparent to the Commission—that Canada is one state within which majority rule and individual liberty are central tenets.

The rights of  
the individual

96. In French Canada, one dominant position was in subtle but striking contrast with this straightforward numerical approach. A lawyer in Quebec described French-speaking Canada as a cohesive minority society with a long history of political, economic and cultural domination by a majority society. He went on: “When they speak of equality, English Canadians mean equality of individual civil rights, that is, of persons considered individually, while when we French Canadians speak of equality we do not mean civil rights at all, we mean collective national rights, we mean the rights of the French Canadian nation to develop in accordance with its own characteristics . . .”<sup>72</sup> The same idea was expressed in Port Arthur, but with the addition of the historical dimension so important in the French Canadian position, when a woman tried to clarify the desire for group equality, for “the right as a founding nation to have an equality of opportunity . . . and equal recognition as one of the two founding nations, not as an ethnic group that is struggling to maintain its culture.”

The rights of  
a minority



Therefore, while they frequently agreed with English-speaking Canadians about the ultimate primacy of individual rights and the conception of majority rule, French-speaking participants felt that as a minority society they must stress the rights of the group. Some explicitly stated that they, too, wish to apply the principles of individual rights and majority rule, but within their national or cultural group, and after they have achieved and consolidated their rights as a group. As was said in Sherbrooke: "To be able to live a life in French there must be a certain number of us; that is to say, there must be a majority."<sup>73</sup> In brief, to liberate the individual for full development it was felt necessary first to secure a majoritarian French Canadian society and culture.

97. At the same time, those French-speaking participants who agreed that political democracy implies the full acceptance of majority rule, hoped that the English-speaking minority in Quebec would integrate more closely with the French majority. One student at Sherbrooke went much further; he suggested that "the English" should disperse and "go west".<sup>74</sup> The idea that people in Quebec had been very generous in the past to the English minority was heard in all the regional meetings in the province, and this view was never challenged. Nor is this surprising, considering the wide range of rights and privileges enjoyed by this minority and generously respected both in spirit and in law by the majority—though historically the English language, the Protestant religion and the separate school system were rights secured by the English for themselves rather than concessions made by the French.\* On the other hand, we sensed the emergence among this English-speaking group of a new awareness of their minority position, and some consciousness of a need to adapt their behaviour to the evident determination of the majority to make the province a vital centre of French language and culture.

98. In the game of numbers and percentages in which the participants engaged, Canadians of ethnic origins other than British and French appeared to occupy a strategic position.

Thus some English-speaking participants liked to emphasize this imposing fraction of the Canadian population, which the latest Census sets at 13.4 per cent according to mother tongue and 26.8 per cent according to ethnic origin. This they did in two different ways. When they looked at the country as a whole they often included in the "English" group all Canadians not of French origin—a procedure which

\*The English language and the Protestant religion automatically became officially recognized at the change of sovereignty in 1763, and needed no protection until Confederation, when for the first time the French majority in the Quebec legislature acquired full control of the powers granted all provinces. The guarantees of section 133 of the BNA Act confirmed, but did not increase, the English language rights in Quebec; it also confirmed the official use of French in Quebec and extended its use to all federal laws and in all federal courts right across Canada, as well as in the federal Parliament. Nothing was said in the BNA Act about the use of either language in the Civil Service of Quebec or Ottawa. The school rights already acquired in Quebec by both Catholics and Protestants were guaranteed by section 93. This whole question, so much a cause of discussion and dispute, will be the subject of very thorough research.

Implications  
for the English-  
speaking  
minority in  
Quebec . . .

. . . and for the  
"other ethnic  
groups"

clearly reduces the relative importance of the "French" group, and thus makes majority rule more imposing. On the other hand, when describing a local situation they had a tendency, especially in the Prairie Provinces, to draw attention to the multi-ethnic composition of the population. A Saskatchewan citizen, in a letter to the Commission, echoed such comments when he wrote: "The fact that the French in this province only number some 59,000 and yet have two broadcasting stations, causes unrest when the 154,000 Germans are denied one."

As for the French-speaking Canadians, they were inclined to regard the non-French peoples of Canada as a uniformly English block, thus magnifying their own minority position, especially where language and not ethnic origin is used as the standard of classification.

Those participants who spoke for groups of other than British or French origin frequently cited numbers and percentages to support their minority claims. Some, as we have seen, told us that these groups constitute "a third force" which is nearly as important numerically, if ethnic origin alone is taken into account, as that of the French Canadians. Moreover, especially in the Prairie Provinces, representatives of certain ethnic groups frequently referred to their numbers at the local level, either to claim rights for their group at that level, or to support their opposition to the rights which French Canadians enjoy or are asking in those provinces.

Others called attention to the fact that no group, strictly speaking, has a majority in the country. Thus the population of British origin, which was 60.5 per cent of the whole in 1871, was no more than 43.8 per cent in 1961.\* Hence, from the ethnic point of view, the Canadian population is made up of more or less important minorities; this was suggested to us at regional meetings. It therefore follows, from this point of view, that the majority rule could not be legitimately applied in our country.

The position of the ethnic minorities was brought to light especially in discussions dealing with "English" and "French" rights. As explained elsewhere, some spokesmen for those other groups saw in these debates a conflict which might relegate them to a second-class status in Canadian society and politics. In Quebec, the position of the ethnic minorities was rarely considered by audiences preoccupied with demands for recognition of the rights of French Canada. Members of some of the other ethnic groups speaking at Commission meetings seemed to feel that the English Canadian position, emphasizing as it does the rights of the individual, took fuller account of their aspirations for social and economic acceptance as individuals. At the same

\*It is important to point out, however, that the mother tongue of 58.4 p.c. of all citizens was English.

time, however, sympathy was expressed by members of some other ethnic minorities for the French-speaking Canadian emphasis on collective recognition. In it spokesmen for the other ethnic groups saw an opportunity for recognition of those principles on which their own group aspirations are based. But since their own aspirations appeared to be more narrowly circumscribed, they did not identify themselves fully with the more sweeping views expressed by many French-speaking participants.

**Practical  
adjustments**

99. These differences in fundamental ideas about the democratic rights were paralleled by ideas about the operation of the democratic process which were also subtly different. English-speaking participants repeatedly stressed that in a democracy there must be no compulsion and that the process of resolving tensions and disagreements must be one of compromise. The dislike of compulsion of any kind in the use of language was often very evident, particularly with regard to qualification for public service. Over and over again it was emphasized that learning French must be voluntary, although it was often regretted that more Canadians did not take advantage of the opportunity. In Calgary, the Commission was told, "Nobody can dictate what language I should use, must use or where I can use it or where I don't. I am the man who will decide that," and this assertion of this feeling recurred with varying degrees of force across English-speaking Canada. Likewise, a second language requirement for the public service was seen by some as discriminatory, and even undemocratic.

On the other hand, even the most moderate of French-speaking Canadians expressed the opinion that promotion of the French language in some of the more important institutions in the country cannot be accomplished without a certain amount of linguistic planning, although they declared almost invariably that such planning did not imply that all Canadians should be called upon to become bilingual. They considered such an objective to be as unattainable and utopian as did their English-speaking compatriots.

**Duality first**

100. Few French-speaking Canadians believed that the democratic process in Canada was genuinely one of pragmatic accommodation or of negotiating compromises on particular problems. Distrusting this process, which most felt would always be conducted on the majority's terms, they asserted that the concept of duality must be established first as a fundamental fact in Canada. Afterwards, the bargaining and compromise process could properly be carried on because it would then be a dialogue between equals. The emphasis on basic institutional change, which we have noted, reflected this viewpoint. As one person said in Rimouski, the process of compromise and accommodation "must acknowledge, on an equal footing, the two pillars of the Canadian nation, based on the English culture and the French culture."<sup>75</sup>

101. As for the attitude, "Nobody can dictate what language I should use, must use, or where I can use it or where I can't"; when this was said in Calgary, we remembered what we had heard in Sherbrooke, Three Rivers and Chicoutimi. In those places, as we have noted in Chapter 2, people complained about the fact that French Canadians, although an overwhelming majority, felt compelled by economic necessity to speak English in order to earn a living. In listening to these protests, it seemed evident that being "dictated" to by an "economic aristocracy" is no more agreeable than being forced by law.

Perhaps, basically, the reactions in English-speaking and French-speaking Canada were quite similar in this connection; but, the situations being very dissimilar, the practical conclusions drawn by spokesmen of the two major groups often clashed; both groups of participants espoused democracy, but tended to see political realities in different ways.

The same feeling  
of compulsion















102. We have endeavoured in the preceding part to present opinions and attitudes as we found them. In this chapter we try to weigh what we have heard, and to look behind the views expressed, as far as we can at this stage.

Introduction

We examine currents of feeling and thought in the French-speaking society of Quebec, and also within the French-speaking groups in other provinces. We try to assess states of mind in English-speaking Canada, including the English-speaking minority in Quebec.

Many people of other than British or French descent consider themselves part of either English-speaking or French-speaking Canada. We are well aware, however, that among such Canadians there is a considerable number who though they regularly use one of the official languages, and are largely integrated in the life around them, still wish to conserve and foster their particular heritage of language and culture. A few Canadians speak neither English nor French. Their problems are real, but not central to our study.

It is clear that the present critical situation arises because of divergences between English and French-speaking Canada, more particularly between French Quebec and English-speaking Canada. Hence the great questions are posed for the whole.

103. What are the underlying causes of these tremendous upheavals, which many Quebecers themselves observe with surprise and occasionally even refuse to face? We are not in a position at the moment to analyze them in depth. But the citizens who took part in the regional meetings, as they made us aware of their hopes and disappointments, enabled us, we believe, to discern the principal sources of unrest.

Quebec: the principal sources of unrest

According to many French-speaking people who spoke to us, the principal institutions in the country are frustrating their desire to live their lives fully as French Canadians. This situation, they said, prevails even in Quebec itself inside the economic institutions of the province: such and such a plant in the locality, managed by English-speaking people, was carrying on its business as though it were in "colonial territory", and was preventing the majority of its employees from working in their mother tongue once they reached a certain level. The English-speaking managerial group—often a tiny proportion of the population—felt no need to speak French and, as a result, rarely bothered to learn it. These people freely admitted that this sort of situation was not new and that, on the contrary, it has always existed in Quebec. But they added *that they could no longer allow it to continue*.

All this has deep meaning, and brings us straight to the nub of the problem. Why, suddenly, when apparently nothing has occurred to upset the traditional order of things, have more and more people

Why, suddenly . . .

decided that they can now 'no longer tolerate' the same 'shackles' which are nonetheless a century old? Could it be, as was suggested at a private meeting in Montreal, that 'among a people who had been walking somewhat bent over, two hundred thousand, five hundred thousand individuals had suddenly decided to pull themselves erect?' Or perhaps that 'Some good sturdy people trained to be docile, have stopped looking on obedience and poverty as a national vocation?'<sup>76</sup> Through these quotations one catches a glimpse of the conflict between generations which is breaking out today in French Quebec. For it appeared to us that dissatisfaction was being most often expressed among representatives of the young, well-educated elite groups of technicians, engineers and executives. But they are not merely young; they belong more or less fully to the "new world" of technology and management and are ready to take a leading part in it; they have the fullest confidence in themselves and plainly show their impatience in the face of the obstacles they meet.

It is almost ironical to recall now the opinion of people who expected that as a result of "modern education and industrialization" there would be an increasing assimilation of Quebec to the rest of Canada. In one sense it is true that North American technology is bringing the two groups closer together and is developing similar patterns of behaviour, a fact which everybody admitted to us; but the greater closeness makes the competition that much keener and strengthens the determination to live and work under the new conditions "in a French way."

The exasperation of the young elite groups which we spoke of above seemed to us to have been heightened by their beginning to sense their numerical importance and by their coming into collision with English-speaking people in positions of control. In comparison with the former mass of employees of the traditional type who for the most part were an army of workers with few special skills, the new elites stand out by their insistence on higher standards of culture and by their ambition to penetrate into the higher ranks of the economic hierarchy. But they did not express their demands particularly by denouncing competition between rivals in which they would be at a disadvantage, although indeed we were told repeatedly that having to do one's best in an unfamiliar language constitutes a real handicap. They appeared rather to base their arguments on the fact that the French Canadians form an overwhelming majority in Quebec. In other words they seemed to consider a status of economic inferiority to be incompatible with the fact of numerical majority.

Speaking of the serialized television novels in Montreal, and of the 'morbid' side of a large part of French Canadian literature, one man from Chicoutimi concluded: "We now have literary heroes who are 'crushed'. The reason for this is that we are a society of 'crushed'

The demands of  
the young  
professionals  
and intellectuals

A "crushed"  
society and a  
"dynamic"  
society

people, we are not yet a developed nation.”<sup>77</sup> Another man from Chicoutimi however believed that he could recognize a “terrific dynamism” in his district. These two pictures—a ‘crushed’ society, worked upon by a creative ‘dynamism’—afford a good illustration of the many contradictions expressed in our presence. A really crushed people submits to its fate, ‘licks its wounds in its corner’. A people which is sure of itself and in full control of its own capacities is not a prey to impatience. The Quebec that showed itself to us has too much strength for the weakness it still preserves, or too many weaknesses for the strength that is deep within it. The rules of the game to which only yesterday people were ready to submit, today were felt to be shackles. If the rules are not modified it is the game itself which is in danger of disappearing.

In the preceding pages we have outlined two significant pictures presented to us: that of a numerical majority (of French Canadians in Quebec) which is said to have been pushed around, and that of a society which is “crushed”. People we heard kept on using expressions of this sort. They also seemed to be expressing at the same time two deep-seated convictions: on the one hand, that they belong unquestionably to an “overwhelming majority”, to a “society”, to a “nation” (the word, in our opinion, is of no great importance; what seemed much more revealing was the search for a term which would define the essence of their social reality as they see it); and on the other hand that this real social entity is, in spite of their aspirations, blocked in its forward thrust, torn or incomplete in its design, in a word, unfulfilled.

104. “Overwhelming majority”, “society”, “nation”: what do they mean? They are used to describe the types of organization and the institutions that a rather large population, inspired by a common culture, has created for itself or has received and which it freely manages over quite a vast territory where it lives as a homogeneous group according to common standards and rules of conduct. This population has aspirations which are its alone, and its institutions enable it to fulfill them to a greater or lesser degree. In any event, this was the way the French-speaking population of Quebec appeared to us. The people who were putting forward grievances or demands in our presence did not try to define the society which surrounds them, but they appeared very consciously to find support in its existence—in a reality that was for them historical and cultural, social and political.

We must stop to consider this point for a moment. For in a number of Canadian cities, especially in the provinces at a greater distance, we saw hundreds of English-speaking people at grips with this problem: trying to picture for themselves what French life in Quebec is really like. This they did, naturally, by starting with what they knew, for

A distinct  
society



example a French minority established in their district. Since most of them were familiar with the size of the Quebec population they then multiplied by three hundred or five hundred the population of the minority they knew, and thought that this gave them a picture of the French province. From a purely mathematical point of view this was a perfectly good calculation; but what they got was a minority multiplied three or five hundred times. They were not seeing the picture of a complete society.

French Quebec, in fact, has more than four million inhabitants. It has its legal institutions—including its own Civil Code—and its political institutions, which a number of people sum up in the expression: “the State of Quebec”. The powers of Quebec are considerable; they enable the French population to exercise an important influence over its own economic and social life, and to manage education. Through this latter power Quebec has been able to provide itself with an educational system—which it can radically alter today—different from that of the other provinces. It has thousands of French schools, both elementary and secondary, normal schools, classical colleges and three French universities, not to mention a system of technical education. It has tens of thousands of teachers. Nevertheless, their control of political institutions and the powers they exercise seemed insufficient to a large majority of Quebecers we met.

This is not all: Quebec has an autonomous network of social institutions: a system of hospitalization, trade unions, voluntary associations of many kinds, and so on. It owns or influences a complex of mass media of communication by which it expresses itself in its own language: 11 daily newspapers,\* about 175 weekly newspapers and 120 periodicals, 46 radio stations, 13 television stations, the French networks of the CBC and of the private stations, whose principal production centre is Montreal, and so forth.

Lastly, it has a considerable number of economic institutions; on the whole, however, with certain notable exceptions such as Hydro-Quebec or the *Caisses Populaires* (credit unions), these concerns are rather modest in size. Furthermore, Quebec participates, through its position in the North American continent, in the general commercial, financial and industrial life of which it forms an integral part; but its participation appears to it to be very small; and it is here above all, as we have seen, that the shoe pinches.

In short, the French-speaking Canadians of Quebec who appeared before us belong—and they showed that they knew it—to a society which expresses itself freely in its own language, and which in various important fields is already master of its own activities, to which it gives

\*Without counting *Le Droit*, an Ottawa daily, which also serves a part of Western Quebec.

the tone and pace it chooses. But at the same time most of those with whom we talked were of the opinion that this society had less than complete control of a number of crucial sectors in which it is active. This, then, seemed to us to be the root of the problem: a unique, functioning society does exist, but many of its members consider it to be deficient and want to make it more or less complete. Remove one of the terms of this two-part proposition and the problem disappears: either there would no longer be a society, and hence no longer any real basis for sustaining these demands; or else there would be nothing left to complete and the demands would disappear.

105. Finally, it should perhaps be emphasized that this society is not only distinct, but also that its individual members, sometimes to a surprising degree, lead a life quite separate from that of English-speaking Canada. We are speaking here of a separation in fact, created by the barrier of language, and not of a doctrinaire separatism.

A life apart

The reason for this is that, contrary to the idea of many English-speaking Canadians, three out of four French Canadians in Quebec, that is to say, a body of people numbering more than three million individuals, do not know a word of English.\* Therefore, for them, and undoubtedly also for a great many more who claim to be "bilingual", daily life (except in large businesses, above a certain level) is carried on exclusively in French, to such an extent that the English-speaking tourist, for instance, has great difficulty in making himself understood.

We became keenly aware of this fact in our regional meetings, not only in Rimouski, where the presence of the English is hardly noticeable, but also in Chicoutimi, Sherbrooke and Three Rivers, and even in Quebec City where we found many complaints that the English influence was harmful. If people have been rebelling against the obligation of learning English in order to reach positions of authority, it is apparently because that obligation, in towns like these, seems neither natural nor logical, since the local way of life is French at every level except one, namely in the higher echelons of big business. Their life is lived among French Canadians, and it seems astonishing or 'scandalous' to them that 'only' English-speaking people are to be found in managerial positions where French Canadians are so often noticeable by their absence.

The same phenomenon showed up, in the course of private meetings, even in French-speaking areas of Montreal: \*\* there are many bilingual

\*74.7 p.c. of the population of French origin living in Quebec. In 1961 there were, in Canada, 3,489,866 persons speaking only French (19.1 p.c. of the total population of Canada), 3,390,704 of whom were of French origin, 32,925 of British origin and 66,237 of other racial origins.

\*\*And even in provinces with an English-speaking majority—for example, in Moncton, New Brunswick we were told of fishing villages on the Atlantic coast where French seems to be the usual and exclusive language spoken. Besides, the statistics confirm these remarks very clearly: according to the 1961 Census almost one-half (or to be exact, 47.1 p.c.) of Canadians of French origin in New Brunswick speak only French.

French-speaking Canadians, but, with the exception of certain business offices and manufacturing plants, life is lived almost entirely in French: family, parish, education, unions, voluntary associations, politics, public recreation.

This description is in no way a definitive one. It will be examined by our researchers. But it affords an idea of the Quebec we saw.

Moreover, the fact of leading a life apart is not new; it dates back to well before the "quiet revolution". However, it does form the background to this revolution and we must be familiar with it if we are to understand the nature of the present conflict.

Their human  
preoccupation

106. Does this imply that Quebec lives shut up within itself? It is necessary, at this stage, to make one point clear. French Canadians are human beings who have all the usual human preoccupations, and they are far from being absorbed entirely by questions of language and culture; they are taken up with their families, their businesses, the arts or the sciences, they have recreational activities, they travel, they take an interest in foreign policy and so forth. Since we had invited them to discuss the problem of languages and cultures in Canada they willingly agreed and some of them spoke passionately on the subject. That does not mean that they are all obsessed by these questions, no matter how intensely they may feel them nor how essential the questions may be for their own future.

Their contacts  
with the  
French-speaking  
world

Furthermore, it so happens that relations with the French-speaking countries (France, Belgium, Switzerland, the countries of what was formerly French Africa, etc.) have never been so intense, at least among the elites. It is probably true that the discovery by some of them of a world which is French-speaking has a reassuring effect and brings them promise of valuable cultural enrichment; in this way French Canadians are becoming more conscious of being a part of a much larger cultural world; some of them are thus having the experience of a world-wide French community, bringing them into contact with Europe, Africa and Asia.

Two basic  
orientations

107. Again, this "separation" from the rest of Canada, which gives Quebec its very distinct physiognomy, should not be equated with the picture of a "monolithic" society. The Quebec we saw is generally characterized, at least in its more dynamic elements, by two very specific trends:

—It is taking a very hard look at itself—it is engaged in what one might almost call a frenzy of self-criticism, directed to nearly every field of activity. Many traditions are being questioned by a society proclaiming its desire for a fresh new start; even the roles of the state and the Church are undergoing radical revisions. Already the respective positions of the government and the clergy have been profoundly changed in the sector of the



social services, and even more so in the field of education; Bill 60 (assented to on March 19, 1964, creating the Department of Education) and the first sections of the Report of the Royal Commission on Education have borne witness to this fact.

—It is showing *a very clear determination to achieve "liberation"*; political emancipation becoming both the means and the symbol—whether thought of as total or relative.

It will have been noted that in themselves these tendencies are not "anti-English"; indeed, concentrating on itself and on its own development, readily impatient, this society is possessed at the moment by such a high degree of self-awareness that many of its members would happily ignore, or at least forget about, anything that is alien to itself.\* It seemed to us that this society is now going through its own crisis, and that its first and most urgent concern is not to attack "the others", but to find its own means of fulfillment. Antagonisms only arise subsequently and opposition develops against anything that threatens to restrict it: against the English minority in Quebec, whose economic role is regarded as dominant; against the central government whose objectives do not necessarily coincide with its own ambitions; against Anglo-Canadian society, which does not accept right away the idea of a cultural duality. At this point the internal conflicts burst onto the Canadian scene. But many of them, would have exploded in any event, even if Quebec had had its full political independence. "Do not forget," a labour representative said to us for example in Quebec, "that there would be a social upheaval here even if all the bosses were French Canadians."<sup>78</sup> Perhaps it might even then be more intense.

Quebec has gradually arrived at a formulation of some of its aspirations which had long remained more or less vague: they have been emerging during the last five years, constantly encountering resistance, which so far they have always managed to override. Their strength is difficult to measure, and their direction is not always clear. Those who explained the objectives of the "quiet revolution" to us plainly agreed on one definite point: the idea of the "emancipation" of Quebec (economic, social and, in varying degrees, political) was central to all their thinking.

108. Nevertheless, on several occasions we had the feeling that this apparently general consensus was in fact artificial. We sometimes felt that it disguised a great diversity, if not outright contradiction, in the basic intellectual viewpoints of those who spoke with us. The ideological positions ranged from marxism to fascism; more or less conscious efforts

Artificial unity?

\*It was pointed out to us that a lack of interest in certain questions relating specifically to the central government is traditional to Quebec. Thus French Canadians never seem to have concerned themselves, in a consistent way, about questions of monetary policy, tariff barriers, customs, etc. As to matters such as immigration or national defence, they would seem to have discussed them only insofar as they affected their particular interests.



made to translate these ideologies into nationalistic terms coloured individual positions considerably.

We also witnessed a peculiar phenomenon. Nearly all of those who talked with us, whether students, journalists or technicians, spoke in the name of the whole French Canadian community or "nation". Very seldom was there any mention in our presence of social classes, still less of class conflict among French Canadians. Such an attitude of mind is surprising among persons who otherwise showed such divergent convictions. It was as though the entire community were regarded as one single social class which was pictured, according to the speaker, either as a militant middle class or an exploited proletariat. Sometimes this identification was even made explicitly: for example, when it was stated that, taken as a whole, the French Canadian community finds itself in the position of a proletariat in relation to the English-speaking minority.

Because of the small number of workers and farmers who took part in the meetings and the few people who spoke explicitly on their behalf, we were unable to estimate to what extent the ideas presented to us could claim the support of the masses. It would appear, however, that the all-encompassing idea of "emancipation" finds a very considerable response among them. Therefore, it seems that they would tend to support, at least passively, the leaders and parties who are in the main stream, and whose ideas seem to get an immediate circulation, especially, of course, when they are headed in the same direction. Great importance must be attached to the points of agreement for they usually concern questions and choices which lie at the very heart of the crisis as we found and have described it.

#### The separatists

109. By their own admission a rather small numerical minority, the separatists nevertheless exercise an influence on French Canadian society which is proportionately higher than their number. They find their membership chiefly in urban centres; have many students, artists, intellectuals and "professionals" in their ranks and belong to every political philosophy; but their leaders and the bulk of their active supporters claim to be democratic and anti-terrorist. Those who do favour violence are the ones who have received the most publicity and made the crisis appear dramatic, but they are only the froth on the surface.

The separatists drew their arguments from the old nationalist arsenal—except for their principal proposition: 'A well-treated minority, the French Canadians are nonetheless a minority. In order to regain control of their destiny they must decide in favour of the sovereign State of Quebec in which they will at last be a majority.' In the eyes of a separatist the double equation "majority=imperial rule" and "minority=colony" is no metaphor but a strict statement of fact. It means that in Canada the great political and economic deci-

sions are taken outside "the French Canadian nation", which has to go along with them. The minority must therefore be "decolonized" so that it may be freed from its status as a "slave nation".

110. Side by side with this ideological separatism, which has often, in relation to political parties, acted as both stimulant and judge, we found many signs of a current of thought which is much more important, but difficult to describe exactly. We have called it "quasi-separatism".\* Here we are thinking of the large number of undecided or pragmatic persons we met who may be recognized by the characteristic of considering every problem that comes up solely in terms of Quebec. In their perspective anything which has to do with the rest of Canada and especially with the federal government is more or less disregarded, or looked on with total indifference, if not indeed with suspicion and anger; moreover, separatism seems to many of them to be one reasonable possibility which it would be wise to examine a little more closely, and no longer a strange and incongruous phenomenon.

The "quasi-separatists"

These individuals belong chiefly to the young elites, and their influence is all the more serious since it is exercised skillfully within political parties and other Quebec institutions of different kinds.

111. The majority of the participants in our regional meetings in Quebec belonged to a third tendency which may be called reformist. Some were content with proposing rather minor changes to the constitution, such as the proclamation at Ottawa of the formal equality of the two languages; others evidently were thinking of obtaining recognition of a special status for Quebec; still others proposed that the constitution be rewritten completely in terms of the equality of the two cultures. But what really struck us was that we did not hear from anyone, if we are not mistaken, who was an avowed defender of the status quo. All the participants declared themselves to be more or less dissatisfied with the situation of French Canada and of Quebec in Confederation.

A majority of reformists

112. Two facts in particular claimed our attention at Chicoutimi and Quebec. First, in both places separatists practically took over the public meetings. Minority though they were, by their technique of putting on speakers and their noisy demonstrations, they effectually reduced the other participants to silence; this, especially at Quebec, distorted the purpose of the public sessions. Their speeches were quite predictable. But the second fact, which did surprise the Commissioners, was the conduct of those whom we shall call, for lack of a better term, "the moderates". Most of them did not say a word.

The "moderates"

Several explanations may be given for this silence: the aggressive spirit of the separatists, the disarming simplifications in their reason-

\*Cf. note on p. 45.

ing, the advantages that an organized group has over single individuals in any meeting, especially when the group is prepared to shout down its opponents. But there was also evident, we believe, a pattern of behaviour that has a symbolic significance in every critical situation; extreme positions steal the limelight and push less inflammatory or more thoughtful opinions into the background, even though the latter may represent majority views. It is even possible by gradual steps to reach the classical phenomenon of revolutionary periods, the paralysis of the "moderates". Not only do they cease to make their voices heard in public debates, but they even begin to find it difficult to conceive and formulate practical solutions in their own minds and they abandon the public arena to the "angry" and the "tough" men because they are afraid of being no longer "in the stream of history".

The incidents about which we are speaking were certainly not as serious as this. However they did give some indication of the turn that events could take should the crisis become more bitter.

#### Common threads

113. In Quebec we in fact heard a wide range of varied opinions. It would be rash to try to estimate the precise value of each with the information we now have. But the important thing was that they all seemed to be cut from the same cloth. And taken all together they came down on one side of the scale—for a greater recognition of the "French Canadian nation", a greater role for "the State of Quebec", and greatly increased scope for the French language, especially in Quebec. Political ideas were constantly related to day-to-day realities and economic activities. The awareness of obstacles acted as a stimulant, or led to extreme conclusions such as separatism or quasi-separatism.

#### The fate of the minorities

114. Two questions were thus posed in a special context: that of the French minorities outside Quebec, and that of the English-speaking minority in Quebec. Two contradictory proposals emerged from the remarks we heard. It was proposed:

—either that a special status be obtained for the French minorities equivalent to that already possessed by the English-speaking population of Quebec which would be respected,

—or that concern for the French minorities be forgotten and thought given to imposing conditions on the English-speaking people of Quebec analogous to those borne today by the French minorities.

These statements could hardly fail to cause some anxiety to the different groups concerned. We shall speak again further on of the English minority in Quebec. As for the French minorities in the other provinces, we frequently noted that they seemed to be thrown off balance by the evolution of Quebec: are they not, they wonder, in danger of being left to their own devices and even of being made to suffer in their areas through repercussions caused by some high-handed actions?



115. This brings us to a consideration of the actual and the symbolic importance of the French minorities:

- the actual importance, because it is a question of more than 850,000 human beings whose mother tongue is French. The Commissioners were sometimes astonished at the casualness with which some participants in Quebec seemed to regard the fate of these people whose language is French, who are found in each of the Canadian provinces, and who, in particular, form more than a third of the population of New Brunswick and a group of 425,000 in Ontario:\*
- the symbolic importance for the future of Canada. Because, for one thing, the French minorities are already one of the important bilingual factors in the country, and they could be a still stronger factor if they obtained the means. For another thing, these minorities have always been a link between Quebec and the other Canadian provinces. In this sense, it is reasonable to say that they occupy a key position in Canada, and until now have represented a cohesive force in the country. For specifically French Canadian reasons they have formed a bond for the French Canadians of Quebec with the rest of Canada. Furthermore, the people of Quebec have always tended to regard the way these minorities were treated in their respective provinces as one of the tangible indications of refusal or acceptance, by English-language Canadians, of the duality of Canada. If, therefore, French-speaking Quebecers should decide to dissociate themselves from the fate of the French minorities, and particularly if they should adopt this attitude because they felt English-speaking Canada was not giving the minorities the chance to live, separatist tendencies might then be that much more encouraged.

116. In short, the problem is now seen to be propounded in its most radical form: is French Canada going to think of itself as maintaining a vital solidarity among its dispersed parts, although centred in Quebec, or as an exclusively Quebec society? This is a question which it will first have to resolve by itself, but the decision will undoubtedly be made in the light of attitudes adopted by English-speaking Canada. This brings us back to the central concept of "equal partnership". At the meetings, when a participant believed in the possible realization of this equality, he spoke as a "moderate" and sought new adjustments within the framework of Confederation. One who did not believe in the possibility of equality, declared himself a separatist, or took a quasi-separatist position. As for the rest their belief in federalism varied according to their attitude toward the possibility of equal partnership.

The importance to Canada of the French-speaking minorities

A fundamental choice

\* See Appendix V, tables 5, 6a and 6b, for statistics on the French-speaking population of Canada, by provinces.



English-speaking  
Canada: a  
different picture

117. The way in which English-speaking Canadians saw the situation was entirely different. Among them there is no counterpart of the feelings and ideas stirring in Quebec. Practically all appeared to us to be content with Confederation. A majority saw little or no need for any important changes in the relationship between themselves and their French-speaking compatriots.

It was plain that most English-speaking Canadians were much less concerned than the French-speaking about questions arising from the duality of Canada. Other matters appeared to be much more present in their minds. In general they seemed to have a great interest in economic matters affecting both the individual and the community. They talk much of measurable practical achievements and aims. Improvements in welfare and education, in social and economic organization, and international questions interest quite a number.

In our meetings, provincial and regional interests were strong. Indeed we were struck at times by the lack of knowledge, not just about Quebec but also about other parts of the country, and by the difficulty many people seemed to have in looking at important questions from an all-Canadian, as opposed to a regional point of view. Yet it was plain that most English-speaking Canadians thought of Ottawa as a "national government" much more than did French-speaking Quebecers.

Close ties with  
the U.S.A.

The United States and our relations with them, were another pre-occupation of English-speaking Canadians. To some it offered a picture of an affluent and fascinating society to be emulated; to others it appeared as a threat to Canadian independence because of the degree of American ownership and control of Canadian industry. The close north-south connections between regions of Canada and corresponding areas of the United States are obvious to any traveller. Certain individuals said they thought that people in their part of the country felt closer to Americans than to French Canadians, and a few suggested that their province might well decide to join the United States if relations with Quebec took a turn for the worse. English-speaking Canadians on the whole seemed somewhat less certain of the continued existence of Canada with its own identity, than were French-speaking Quebecers that a distinct French-speaking society will persist.

Historical  
background

118. It was difficult to assess the depth of attachment to Canada which English-speaking Canadians felt. They seemed to lack facility in expressing a sense of belonging, perhaps because old ways of stating this had included an affirmation of the British connection, and many no longer wanted to use this kind of language. Old historical ties and sentimental attachments to Britain seemed to persist more in some regions than others, but they are not as strong as many French Canadians think, nor are they a considerable influence in Canadian affairs. Respect for British institutions as adapted to Canadian needs, seemed

much more real, and this respect was shared by many whose forefathers did not come from the British Isles. On the other hand, even those who were sentimentally drawn towards Britain valued highly the independence and separate identity of Canada.

Because English Canadians have not yet developed a vocabulary and a set of symbols which they could use without embarrassment to express their sense of being Canadian, we suspect that French Canadians were led to underestimate the strength of these feelings. They were difficult for French Canadians to grasp, because they did not precisely parallel French Canadian nationalism.

Attachment to the land itself was undoubtedly an element of importance for both groups. Many English-speaking Canadians looked back to a pioneering era which in the Maritimes began in the mid-eighteenth century and in Ontario and the Eastern townships of Quebec in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

In the Prairie Provinces there was much pride expressed in the settling of a vast territory by people from older parts of Canada, including some from Quebec at an early stage; from the United States; and from many parts of Europe.

Earlier English discoverers had reached Hudson's Bay in 1610, the Prairies in 1694 and the Mackenzie Basin in 1789. In some of these areas, French explorers and fur traders had passed through very early; in other regions, such as that north of the Prairies and in British Columbia, the first Europeans to enter the land came from Britain. We were conscious, then, of a love of country based on settlement which all Canadians shared.

119. But many English-speaking Canadians at the regional meetings seemed to add to this love of their land a pride in having been the chief architects of modern Canada. While it was not explicitly stated, it was as though they looked back to a period, stretching from the end of the eighteenth century to the present, when the aim of their forebears had been not so much to create a distinctive society as to make sure that they as individuals, and their communities, shared in the commercial and industrial development which was bringing new levels of prosperity to the western world. Indeed, one of the forces which led to Confederation was a desire to duplicate the American free trade area in the northern half of the continent. The metropolitan centres which this industrializing and trading spirit built—Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal (though Montreal lay in the heart of French Canada)—are seen as evidence of the practical achievements of this cultural group.

A number of English-speaking Canadians evidently resented being diverted from the task of continuing to build this kind of Canada, with which they had identified themselves for generations. Some of

Architects of  
modern Canada

them at least were becoming conscious that French Canada was asking that they modify their institutions to make room for the French language and culture. A common reaction was impatience and irritation that French-speaking Canadians who had, according to them, devoted their energies almost wholly to building other kinds of institutions—the parish, the classical college, the family business and the resettlement area—should now complain of exclusion from the executive levels of industrial and commercial corporations.

A strong feeling  
for personal  
freedom

It was at least equally common, however, to find that the pride of English-speaking Canadians in being part of a country with a high standard of living, with well developed trade connections to the United States, Britain and Europe, and with firmly established political institutions, was unmixed with any consciousness of ethnic discrimination. They believed that every Canadian, whatever his origin, enjoys the freedom to educate himself, to work hard, and to get ahead. But it was just this belief, typical of a majority, that the most important freedoms are personal, that made full comprehension of French Canada's emphasis on group rights difficult for them to grasp—particularly language rights in economic matters.

"The nation"

When English-speaking Canadians talked of "the nation" they usually meant all the people who live in Canada. They did not think of themselves as forming a national group or "nation" in the same sense that so many French-speaking Canadians do. Someone made the remark, 'There are not two nations in Canada; just one, the French Canadian—and then all the rest.' But it was in part because of the genuine strength of their feeling for Canada that so many English-speaking Canadians we met were resentful and upset when they heard of movements that would divide the country.

A sense of  
superiority

120. It seems to us that many English-speaking Canadians draw assurance from the fact that they are part of a larger English-speaking culture in North America, and of a still wider English-speaking brotherhood in the world. Among those who speak English, the liberal-democratic ideology is a common possession. To English Canadian eyes, the outside world is more likely to nourish than to weaken Canadian culture; for them, the "non-self" has never been as clearly defined as for French Canada, because her economic and political ties with France were suddenly broken in the eighteenth century, whereas English Canadian ties with the Empire and the United States continued and expanded.

We noticed that some English-speaking Canadians attached great importance to the widening use of English in the modern world, and that this strengthened a sense of assurance that at times manifested itself in an attitude of superiority toward French Canadians. We felt we detected this quite often, even among people who made declarations of great goodwill towards their fellow Canadians.



The often-asked question ‘What does Quebec want?’ may indicate genuine interest in the aspirations of French-speaking Quebecers. But often, too, it sounded like the question of a master asking about the petition of an inferior so that he might decide whether to grant some request or not. Did this sense of superiority amount to the attitude of a colonizing power as some young French Canadians had claimed? Sometimes it had an historical source: the conquest was referred to overtly, as if French-English relations in Canada had been settled once and for all on the Plains of Abraham in 1759. In part, however, it reflected a belief that an equally advanced cultural group, which could have developed in the same way as English Canada, had made a bad choice. The people who bluntly put the blame for “Quebec’s problems” on French-speaking Canadians themselves obviously thought this way. Their “superiority” was the result of their earlier development in science and technology. Many of them did not realize that French Canada had begun to produce scientists, engineers and large-scale administrators, and that there is a twentieth century dynamism in Quebec. If they did, they often felt that “latecomers” should not try to alter the terms of entry into the new economic world, (to “change the rules in the middle of the game,” as we were told in Moncton) and should accept that English would be the language of advancement.

121. The English-speaking minority of Quebec is in a particular position and has distinct concerns of its own at the present time. Unlike the French and most other minorities it has no spokesmen claiming to represent its needs and to protect its interests; its command of its own educational, industrial, and above all financial institutions has hitherto made this unnecessary. It is clear that many different views and emotions are current in this group. Some appear to be thinking and acting as though nothing had happened in their province in the last five years; others are deeply concerned about their future. There is a great increase in the numbers attending French classes. Sympathetic individuals think that developments in Quebec are fascinating and presage great things for the future. We have heard of only a few who have left or who are thinking of leaving the province, and it appears that the business world generally is enjoying an expanding prosperity.

We held only private meetings in Montreal, where the great majority of English-speaking Quebecers reside. From these brief contacts came additional impressions. We found that French Canadian Montrealers considered it quite unacceptable that “the second largest French-speaking city in the world” should still look so English, use only the English language in most of its business life, be so dominated by an English Canadian economic elite. English-speaking Montrealers, on the contrary, were aware that people other than French Canadians have played a leading role in the city’s growth. At present, those whose ethnic origin

The English-speaking minority of Quebec



English-speaking  
Canadians'  
attitudes toward  
French Canada

or mother tongue is other than French constitute over one-third of the population of the metropolitan area. Among them are members of families who were settled in Montreal during that period in the mid-nineteenth century, when the English-speaking presence loomed much larger than today.\* We believe that Montreal must be a field of detailed research.

122. English-speaking Canadians' attitudes to French Canada covered a wide range. An apparently small number of people hold extreme, but conflicting views. Some resented the fact that there are French-speaking people in Canada and that French is an official language, and we found a desire to make English the only effective language in Canada. There were others who said, 'let Quebec separate if she wants to. We will be better off without her.' Most of these extremists seemed to think that relations between English and French-speaking Canadians were settled for all times by "the conquest". Often hostility toward French-speaking Canadians was connected with a similar feeling toward the Catholic Church.

Another view, to which we have referred, was that French is bound to disappear as a language of active communication in Canada in the long run. The small French island, it is thought, cannot avoid a gradual assimilation to the culture and language of North America. Some believe this who favour a wider use of French now. It seems from one generation to another, each time using new arguments, many people continue to hope that this massive anglicization "is just around the corner", on a continent which has been "the burying ground of so many languages and cultures".

This illusion has a noble ancestry. It obtained the support of Lord Durham one hundred and twenty-six years ago. The Lord Commissioner proposed a policy of anglicization which was partly the inspiration for the Act of Union of 1840, and which came to nothing. At that time there were half a million French Canadians; today there are more than five million.

This belief in inevitable assimilation is in sharp contrast to the feeling of most French Canadians—except perhaps of certain Quebec separatists who are in favour of secession precisely because of their fear that the federal form of government will bring about the anglicization of French Canada. Should their deep-rooted anxiety ever take hold of Quebec it is very possible that almost the entire province would rush to embrace separatism.

\*The 1961 Census of Canada shows that in Montreal Metropolitan area 35.8 p.c. of the population are of non-French ethnic origin, while 35.2 p.c. have a mother tongue other than French. To be non-French, of course, is not the same thing as to be part of "English-speaking Montreal", although the historical tendency is for more immigrants to assimilate to the English Canadian rather than to the French Canadian group. British origin Montrealers make up 17.9 p.c. of the Metropolitan area population; English mother tongue residents constitute 23.4 p.c. By contrast, in 1861, when the proportion of the English in Montreal was at its highest the Census shows: British origin 50 p.c.; French origin 48.2 p.c. and other ethnic origins 1.8 p.c. It should be noted that these 1861 figures are for the city of Montreal proper, and not for the Metropolitan area. Their reliability is uncertain.

123. The great bulk of English-speaking opinion seemed to us to be moderate. It has no animus against French-speaking Canadians. It would like to see French-speaking Canadians happy and participating vigorously in the development of Canada. It has general respect for the French language and would like to see it better taught to more young English-speaking Canadians. It tends to be bewildered and often hurt by reports from Quebec.

Moderate, but  
unaware

But throughout English-speaking Canada there was tragically little awareness of the feelings and aspirations of French-speaking Canadians. Few had come to grips with the questions that Quebec's resurgence poses for all Canadians.

We do not, however, wish to present a picture bleaker than it really is. At each meeting we heard some observations that were remarkable for the knowledge they showed of Quebec and of Canada. Everywhere we met certain individuals, often young people, who could explain the situation and who showed great insight into the changes that are taking place in Quebec. We had the impression that the number of English-speaking Canadians with such understanding is growing. A number of others, who had still not grasped the nature of the issues, seemed anxious to find out more about underlying causes and to be asking themselves what changes are necessary.

It should be added that some divide responsibility for the present crisis between English and French-speaking Canadians. On the one hand they feel that English-speaking Canadians have been less than fair; on the other hand they believe that French-speaking people in Quebec are themselves responsible for many of their own difficulties. The fact that there is strong self-criticism in Quebec itself was quoted as evidence.

It was plain to us, however, that, as we have said, the great majority of English-speaking Canadians misunderstand the nature of the problems raised by contemporary French Canada. To very many Canada appears as essentially an English-speaking country with a French-speaking minority, to which certain limited rights have been given. So far most do not seem to have understood, or to be ready to meet the implications of "equal partnership".

“Other” Cultures

124. A great majority of Canadians of other than French or British origin speak English, use it regularly in their daily lives, and are more or less integrated to the English-speaking society. A much smaller number speak French and tend to become associated with the French-speaking society. A comparatively few, who live in groups where their

Various  
degrees of  
integration

own language is commonly used, speak little or no French or English. Of the great number that habitually use one of these languages in their working lives, some are anxious also to maintain their own language and the cultural heritage that goes with it; others are content to see their children grow up just like Canadians of British or French origin, or have themselves been fully integrated. Still, as already noted, and particularly at the preliminary hearing in Ottawa, we were struck by the number of representatives of those groups who spoke fluently in both English and French.

A cultural richness and a Canadian experience

A good number of these Canadians spoke to us, on many different occasions, of the very serious and sometimes thorny problems they are facing in Canada. We thus began to understand and measure the importance of the cultural riches which they brought with them and which they wish to preserve. We know their difficulties a little better, but also their pride and their feeling of belonging to Canada. For instance, when Canadians of Ukrainian origin vigorously stood up against the idea of "two founding races" it was because they were deeply conscious of having themselves cleared and opened great stretches of territory in Northern Ontario and the Prairies, and of having contributed in this way to the "founding" of a part of modern Canada.

Representatives of certain ethnic groups have already made known their demands which, on the whole, are quite moderate; some of them appear in Part Two of this report. It should be understood of course that we shall be continuing our study of these claims in our final report. The question we are asking ourselves here is somewhat narrower: what role do the other ethnic groups play in the crisis which is threatening to tear Canada apart today?

Diverse groups

125. It is difficult to describe the character of a segment of the population that is so diverse: each ethnic group has its own original language and culture. And even within one group, because of factors of geography or individual characteristics, many divergences are to be found. These people's experiences of "Canada" differ in both time and space; it is a long step from an immigrant's grandson born in Montreal, to someone who has himself had to live through the traumatic experience of being transplanted onto the Prairies. If it is not always easy for Canadians of the two traditional cultures to come to grips with the meaning of their own heritage, what shall we say of the Canadian of a different origin for whom integration has been sometimes a dramatic experience?

Moreover, some of these groups did not present themselves to us at the regional meetings. We met very few Canadians of German or Dutch origin, relatively few Poles, Italians or Finns, but many Ukrainians. Finally, among those who participated in the discussions, reactions



differed greatly from one minority to another. With a few exceptions these groups only became numerous many years after Confederation. Nevertheless, it seems that the immigrants—except those who settled in Quebec—have not always been aware that they were entering a bilingual and fundamentally bicultural country; a number even remarked that Canada has been presented to them as a unilingual country using the English language, or even as simply a British colony. For this reason the demands of French Canadians seemed to them to be a new and in many ways surprising fact.

Consequently the theory of “equal partnership” seems suspect to them; they see in it an attempt to manufacture an “aristocracy” from which they would be excluded. In reaction, some of them would like to define Canada as a collection of minorities among whom it would be unfair to choose only one, whether it be one or other of the two most important, and endow it with a privileged status; it would be better, in their opinion, to accept the fact of the multiplicity of cultures and recognize only one language of communication, English, except perhaps in Quebec, where the principal language would be French. And thus, by way of a detour and with a new set of arguments, we are back to the concept of Canada as an English country with the French enclave of Quebec.

Mistrust and  
divergences

However, the argument put forward above has another aspect: if it is true that certain recent immigrants are scarcely conscious of the fact that they belong to a bilingual and bicultural country, it seemed to us equally clear that other Canadians are not yet fully aware of the relatively new presence among them of these people. It seems to us that an evolution is needed in the thinking of Canadians of British and French origin; they are no longer the only ones in Canada, and they will have to take this very important human factor into account.

Here and there the idea of a “melting pot” after the American pattern entered into the discussions. Others—Ukrainians in particular—took delight in emphasizing “multiculturalism” as the distinctive characteristic of Canadian society. However, it seemed to us that the prototype of the United States cast a spell over the opinions of several ethnic groups: the picture of a vast country where the national goal is to create a vital unity without taking into account all the languages and cultures.

There were certainly other voices and other opinions. A varied range of views was offered to us, bearing witness to the efforts being made to work the other ethnic groups into a really Canadian context, distinct from the “melting pot” or “balkanization”. On several occasions we saw evidence of a great longing for all to pull together for the unity of the country and to participate in Canadian life in accordance with contemporary needs. But we could not say that the other ethnic groups



proposed a clear, consistent and definite formula. They, too, are trying to find themselves in the present troubled waters; they, too, must carry on an examination of collective conscience in the most genuine way.

To the degree that the demands of certain ethnic groups make awareness of the fundamental duality of the country more difficult, to that extent they aggravate the state of crisis in Canada. Above all, they provide new arguments for the partisans of a "One Canada". Nevertheless, the study of problems facing Canadians of other than British or French origin gives rise to a number of questions which make it possible to evaluate better the present situation in Canada and to judge more fairly the difficulties we are experiencing.

The first  
Canadians

126. In this conflict which divides the two societies by setting them one against the other, Indians and Eskimos are in a position apart. When the question of bilingualism was raised at the meeting of the Indian-Eskimo Association in London, the older chiefs present voiced their concern that certain changes might affect their status: 'Our treaty was written in English and was signed under the British flag. If we change the language, the treaty becomes worthless.' Younger members of the group showed their interest in this matter, but one of them who belonged to the National Indian Council recognized that there was no doubt whatever, in his mind, about French being the official language of Canada. At the regional meeting in Victoria an Indian chief upon being asked if he believed the demands of French Canadians should be met, gave this reply: 'Certainly. If another group can succeed in doing something when we have been condemned to death, we will be glad for them.' Then he added that 'my grandchildren no longer know the language of my people, but can speak French . . .' In Toronto the members of the Indian Advisory Committee of the Ontario Department of Public Welfare told us: 'If it is a law of the country that people speak two languages, the Indians will accept it.' But above all, they wanted to stress the necessity of maintaining the unity of the provinces in Confederation. 'Separatism is not going to solve the problem. It will give more problems to the French people—they should not try to isolate themselves in one province.'

## Two systems of explanation

Dialogue or  
soliloquies?

127. Our preliminary report to a large extent has dealt in contrasts; rightly so, we believe, for these contrasts between the two societies together make up the overwhelming single impression we carried away from our regional meetings.

These contrasts reach out to all aspects of political, social and cultural life. They gave rise to a host of questions and problems which

are at the very heart of the inquiry which the Commission is now continuing. It appeared to us as we have already pointed out that those who participated in the regional meetings used different systems of explanation, from many opposing points of view. They hoped in these ways to explain the position of their culture or their group as it appeared to them.

Are the present tensions to be explained by the fact that the dominant concepts in the field of politics governing the rules of the game are basically of English-speaking origin and were formulated by and for a majority indifferent to the needs and aspirations of the minority? Or, on the contrary, by the fact that the demands and recriminations of the minority, considering the rights it already possesses and the concessions and privileges it has been granted, are largely unjustified? On the social and economic plane is the present situation to be explained by one form or another of discrimination practised against the French language and French Canadians, or by the type of intellectual and technical education the latter receive in Quebec? In either case would one or other of these two methods of explanation fully account for all the facts?

We shall endeavour to deal with these questions in our final report, for we shall then be better prepared to give replies. For the time being may we note that the two approaches are incompatible, and that very likely neither is a complete explanation. It seemed to us that all too often they were being used as weapons and not meant as a genuine effort to account for the facts; thus they expressed attitudes born of emotion at least as much as objective opinions. The facts themselves were frequently not very well known, yet on both sides people made vigorous assertions of fact as though each one was beyond dispute. Each person followed his own trajectory, without a care for anyone else's. To quote the Durham report, (1838) "they thus live in a world of misconceptions, in which each party is set against the other not only by diversity of feelings and opinions, but by an actual belief in an utterly different set of facts . . ." Thus it was that the regional meetings a century and one quarter later, very often gave us the impression of listening not to a dialogue, but to two soliloquies.

128. It does seem to us that it is of vital concern to all Canadians, whatever their descent, that there be a resolution of the intense current problems that have emerged from the duality of Canada. We must recall that in the more extreme sectors we have found, even among individuals otherwise "moderate":

- English-speaking Canadians of various origins who reject even the idea of equality;
- French-speaking Canadians who now refuse even to consider the idea of a "partnership".

Equal  
partnership









129. All that we have seen and heard has led us to the conviction that Canada is in the most critical period of its history since Confederation. We believe that there is a crisis, in the sense that Canada has come to a time when decisions must be taken and developments must occur leading either to its break-up, or to a new set of conditions for its future existence. We do not know whether the crisis will be short or long. We are convinced that it is here. The signs of danger are many and serious.

The ways in which important public and private institutions now operate strongly dissatisfy a very significant part of the Canadian population, while the other part remains largely indifferent to this situation, or does not even know of its existence.

A strong impression we drew from our contacts with thousands of French-speaking Canadians of all walks of life and of all regions of the country was the extent to which, for most of them, questions of language and culture do not occur in the abstract. They are rooted in the experiences of daily life, in jobs, in meetings, in correspondence with public and private corporations, in the armed forces. They are inseparably connected with the social, economic and political institutions which frame the existence of a people and which should satisfy their many needs and aspirations. The opinions we heard were often the result of ordinary individual and collective experiences; hence our conviction that they can hardly be changed by simple appeals to abstract ideas like "national unity". It seemed to us that the dissatisfaction and the sense of revolt came from aspects of reality rather than from doctrines that had been preached.

At the same time we were confronted constantly by English-speaking Canadians, including many expressing sentiments of goodwill, who seemed to have no realization of the daily experiences that cause the discontent among so many of their French-speaking fellow citizens. Nor do most understand the underlying trend toward the increasing autonomy of Quebec and the strengthening of the belief among her people that she is now building herself into a distinct form of nationhood with full control of all her social and economic institutions. What is grasped is frequently rejected. Thus there exists a deep gulf, with unawareness on one side, and strongly rooted feeling on the other.

We are convinced that it is still possible to rectify the situation. But a major operation will perhaps be unavoidable. The whole social body appears to be affected. The crisis has reached a point where there is a danger that the will of people to go on may begin to fail.

This is an initial diagnosis, not a prophecy. We describe what we saw and summarize what we heard, without the least feeling of defeatism, for the Canadian situation has, most fortunately, another aspect. Most of the people we met love Canada. We believe that once they

Scars of past  
conflicts

are aware of the danger threatening it, they will apply themselves to removing the causes. Nevertheless, the crisis appears to us to be an undeniable fact.

130. Canada has lived through other and less profound crises before, which have brought to the surface very different concepts about the country held by French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians. We found the memories of these past events very much alive, especially in French Canada. Thus a sense of grievance can accumulate with each successive conflict no matter how it has been resolved.

Canada was of course born out of warfare between the "two founding peoples" as it was born also out of the white man's imposition of his culture upon the original Indians and Eskimos. From the Indian point of view, French and English both have the same title to the land—conquest. Quebec tends to feel that the French were settlers and the English invaders. We have indicated before that even these ancient battles have not ceased on both sides to motivate present behaviour. The youths who destroy monuments in Quebec want history re-written—at least for the future. An English Canadian looking at this early period usually either wants to restore the monuments, and thus symbolize a return to the status quo; or else he remembers principally the granting of representative government, the coming of responsible government, and the other constitutional achievements which have made present day Canada a "nation", giving wide opportunities to its citizens for self-development and occupying a significant place in world affairs. Lord Durham is to the French the great assimilator; to the English the great decolonizer.

Conflicts since Confederation are well known, although viewed from totally different aspects by the two main participants. Riel, the "murderer", was hanged; Riel, the defender of minority rights, was judicially murdered. Manitoba was endowed at its birth by an English-dominated federal Parliament, with the two official languages and separate schools; but the local Manitobans took away these rights, and when the Government in power at Ottawa proposed to force the schools back on the unwilling Manitobans, the people in Quebec voted solidly for a Laurier who rejected compulsion. Yet to Quebec the Manitoba experience proves that "les Anglais" everywhere are untrustworthy, and that when the chips are down the majority always wins. Regulation 17 in Ontario, adopted in 1913, severely limiting the use of French as a language of instruction in separate schools, was repealed by a later Ontario government; but this change of heart did little to restore the animosity originally aroused by the Regulation. Conscription in 1917 and again in 1942 appeared to many in English Canada as a necessity for a nation committed to victory in crucial wars; but in Quebec it

seemed to drag a peaceful people into conflicts of prime concern only to those of British descent.

These earlier conflicts, however, were settled by one means or another. But they are not unrelated to the present crisis. On the contrary, it seems to us that, recorded in the memory of the “nations” in the form of synthetic opinions (“The French Canadians are never satisfied”, or “The English Canadians will never understand us”), these half-resolved old conflicts are coming together again—this time in a less spectacular but nevertheless deep-rooted crisis, which may be, over and above anything that is new, the product and consummation of all the past resentments. The previous conflicts did not seriously threaten the fundamentals of the state. The crisis today is of a different order. There has never been the feeling, except perhaps among a few individuals and groups, that the fundamental conditions for the existence of the Canadian people were in jeopardy.

This time, as we have noted on many occasions throughout these pages, the themes of the situation are complex and difficult to define because they are global. It is not only one aspect of Canadian life that is at issue; the vital centre is in danger: we mean the will to live together, at least under present conditions.

131. What is at stake is the very fact of Canada: what kind of country will it be? Will it continue to exist? These questions are not matters for theoreticians only, they are posed by groups of human beings. And other groups by refusing to ask themselves the same questions actually increase the seriousness of the situation.

Canada's  
existence  
threatened

The chief protagonists, whether they are entirely conscious of it or not, are French-speaking Quebec and English-speaking Canada. And it seems to us to be no longer the traditional conflict between a majority and a minority. It is rather a conflict between two majorities: that which is a majority in all Canada, and that which is a majority in the entity of Quebec.

That is to say, French-speaking Quebec acted for a long time as though at least it had accepted the idea of being merely a privileged “ethnic minority”. Today, the kind of opinion we met so often in the province regards Quebec practically as an autonomous society, and expects her to be recognized as such.

This attitude goes back to a fundamental expectation for French Canada, that is, to be an equal partner with English-speaking Canada. If this idea is found to be impossible, because such equality is not believed in or is not acceptable, we believe the sense of deception will bring decisive consequences. An important element in French-speaking Quebec is already tempted to go it alone.

We are conscious of the fact that no one can foretell future events, Adjustments



and that even as we write this report the picture keeps changing. Since the appointment of the Commission in July 1963, many accommodations have been negotiated. Adjustments have been made in federal-provincial relations that have met certain of Quebec's particular demands. Joint federal-provincial programs, so much a part of our recent constitutional history, have given way to opting out devices; federal pension plans have been adapted to Quebec's needs, and tax sharing has greatly enlarged the freedom of Quebec. The public funds available for use by the people of Quebec through their government have in effect increased substantially. The visit of Her Majesty in October 1964 exposed forces and disclosed attitudes which caused serious reflection on all sides. The climate of opinion, particularly in the Province of Quebec, seems to change rapidly and we cannot foretell what new directions it will take. Nevertheless, in spite of the importance of these events and adjustments, we are convinced the opinions we heard spring from attitudes too deeply rooted for them to have been modified in any significant or permanent way. Thus, we must reiterate that we have found overwhelming evidence of serious danger to the continued existence of Canada.

Grounds  
for hope

132. On the other hand we are not blind, nor do we think any Canadian should be, to hopeful aspects in the situation. In spite of present differences in outlook Canadians of different origins have much in common. They share many facets of a great common European tradition; and they maintain many connections across the Atlantic. They have lived together for 200 years. Geography and conditions of life in the northern half of North America have a common influence on them. They join in a common love for their land as such. Abroad, English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians have often found that they have more in common with each other than with citizens of other countries. All Canadians are members of a modern, technologically advanced society, with all that this implies in problems and in opportunities. The advances taking place in Quebec, while they may increase the sense of competition between French and English-speaking Canadians, may also give them more to talk about together than ever in the past.

We think that there are grounds for hope in the signs we discovered of evolving attitudes among English-speaking Canadians. The number of those who understand the issues seems to be increasing; the number who wants to understand appears to be growing still more rapidly. In Quebec the very vigour of developments may reduce the frustrations felt by many people, and at the same time, lead them to put less blame on the English-speaking majority in Canada, and to accept more responsibility for themselves. During the year we have noted in New Brunswick in particular, but also in other parts of Canada, positive signs of better

understanding of the aspirations and needs of the French-speaking minorities. In our opinion, there is substantially more comprehension in English Canada of the need for adjustments than there was a few years ago.

It is hardly possible to travel across Canada from coast to coast, and to talk to literally thousands of Canadians of different origins and background, as we have done, without being struck by the enormous potentialities of this country and its people. It seemed to us again and again that current problems between the peoples of Canada are impeding great advances. A solution to the dilemma posed by duality would, we are sure, release immense energy and creative power. Vitality could then come from the very differences and tensions among Canadians. The extra power released could be turned to making Canadian life as a whole better for all its citizens: to economic and social improvements; to increasing opportunities for the individual as a human being whatever his language; to enhancing Canada's contribution to all humanity. Then the potentialities of the two cultures, English and French-speaking, with the enriching contributions from those of other origins, each working in its own way for common purposes, could be enormous.

133. Wide-ranging negotiations, however, will be necessary between the major groups of Canadians. We believe that Canada will live and thrive if there can be a satisfactory matching between the minimum of what French-speaking Canadians consider as vital, and the maximum that English-speaking Canadians will accept. In our final report we hope to make recommendations about adjustments and accommodations that seem reasonable and fair. However, any necessary changes can be introduced and become effective only if, on each side, there is an insistent, driving desire to understand the other, and to consider the common good.

The will to  
negotiate

But it appears to us that there are some vital prerequisites to a positive outcome of the present state of crisis. There must be important changes in attitudes.

134. In particular we suggest that all Canadians examine closely the concept of democracy itself. Too often, it has been reduced to the simple game of majority versus minority. Some English-speaking citizens before the Commission invoked the "law of the majority" as though they were brandishing a threatening weapon; some French-speaking people, who had complained bitterly of the consequences of this "law", expressed the desire to make use of it to their own advantage in a more or less independent Quebec.

Canadian  
democracy:  
what is it  
and what can  
it become

It is true that, on a number of occasions, this rule has played its part in Canadian history, leaving behind bitter memories among those who felt its weight. And the fact that a cultural majority can always have recourse to it may appear to a minority to represent a threat to its

liberty. But that way of looking at things is so incomplete that it becomes a caricature.

It does not take into account the constitutional guarantees a cultural minority may obtain. It overlooks the fact that we live in a federation, one result of which is that the division of authority between Ottawa and the provinces reduces the "English majority" to the state of a minority in Quebec, in connection with provincial matters, while it gives the "French minority" the status of a majority; the consequences of this fact should be considered, for example, in the fields of education and natural resources. To reduce the function of a parliamentary democracy to a simplified game of numbers is to reason in the abstract. As a matter of fact, decisions made in Parliament (as for that matter, in the Legislative Assemblies) are the result of a rather complicated and subtle process: discussions or compromises within cabinets and parties in which both groups are represented; political considerations and economic influences of various kinds; federal-provincial bargaining in certain cases, and so on. Lastly, in a great number of matters, ethnic and cultural factors never arise or have little importance. It seems urgent that observations of this kind concerning the political system be thoroughly examined. In any case, this is a task we shall be taking up in the hope on our part of gaining a better idea of how cultural equality may be achieved, without unfairness to any one and without any open break.

Need for a  
truer  
understanding

135. From evidence so far accumulated, it appears to us that English-speaking Canadians as a whole must come to recognize the existence of a vigorous French-speaking society within Canada, and to find out more about the aspirations, frustrations and achievements of French-speaking Canadians, in Quebec and outside it. They must come to understand what it means to be a member of a minority, or of a smaller partner people, and to be ready to give that minority assurances which are unnecessary for a majority. More than a century ago, Sir John A. Macdonald wrote to an English-speaking friend: "Treat them as a nation and they will act as a free people generally do—generously. Call them a faction and they become factious."\* They have to face the fact that, if Canada is to continue to exist, there must be a true partnership, and that the partnership must be worked out as between equals. They must be prepared to discuss in a forthright, open-minded way the practical implications of such a partnership. To some extent, they must be prepared to pay by way of new conditions for the future of Canada as one country, and to realize that their partner of tomorrow will be quite different from their partner of yesterday.

On the same evidence, it seems to us that French-speaking Canadians

\*Cf. Brown Chamberlin Papers, vol. 2, Macdonald to Chamberlin, January 21, 1856.



for their part must be ready to respond positively if there are to be truly significant developments toward a better partnership. It would be necessary for French-speaking Quebecers to restrain their present tendency to concentrate so intensely on their own affairs, and to look so largely inward. Problems affecting all Canada are their problems too. They would need to beware of the kind of thinking that puts "la nation" above all other considerations and values. They too, like the English-speaking, should forget the conquest and any psychological effects they think it left. They would have to avoid blaming English-speaking Canadians for shortcomings which are their own; and at times, to remember that English-speaking Canadians have their feelings too. They, as well as the English-speaking, must remember that, if a partnership works, each party must give as well as get.

136. All ten of us are convinced that in the present situation there is a grave danger for the future of Canada and of all Canadians. There are those who feel that the problems will lessen and go away with time. This is possible, but, in our view, it is more probable that unless there are major changes the situation will worsen with time, and that it could worsen much more quickly than many think.

There are hopeful signs; there are great possibilities for Canada. But we are convinced at the present time that the perils must be faced.

The imminence  
of perils





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## Postscript



137. This, may we point out once more in closing, is only a preliminary report—in other words, a presentation of interim opinions about a situation that we have examined rapidly. If we felt it was necessary to present them at all, it was because they sprang from unanimous convictions, which were freely arrived at by ten Canadians belonging to the two cultures or coming from circles integrated with one of the cultures. It was also because the impressions of these ten soon developed into a sense of urgency.

Interim opinions

But it should not be expected that a treatise of this kind should arrive at precise recommendations. These will form the conclusions of the final report of the Commission, which will be based on objective facts.

138. To reach that point, the Commission will deeply study all the briefs: those it has already received, and those still to come in. It will go on to hold public hearings. It will continue to develop special contacts with individuals, institutions, associations and groups which it considers necessary to meet. It will see, as far as it can, all those who express a wish to be heard.

The briefs

139. At the same time, it will continue to work, with the collaboration of a group of experts, on the completion of its own research program.

The extent and  
nature of the  
research program

The Commission has undertaken extensive research for several reasons. Most important is the dearth of reliable information about the roles which are played by members of different cultural groups in our society, and on the numerous ways in which these groups interact—sometimes fruitfully, sometimes with tension and suspicion. In the federal public service, private business, voluntary associations, the arts and letters, political parties and government, Canadians with various backgrounds participate; education and the media of communication tell them about each other. Only through deep study can the Commissioners hope to discover the danger points, the growth points, and the promising lines of change in our bicultural relations. Only through vigorous and independent research can they have some confidence that their recommendations will be practicable and appropriate, both to our present situation and to the goals of greater equality between Canada's two founding cultures and full, constructive participation by those of other ethnic origins.

Research will also enable the Commission to verify the statements which already have been made and those which will be made to them about French, English and other Canadians. Often it is difficult to distinguish fact from prejudice, reality from myth. With the best of good will, many Canadians have believed half-truths and untruths about those whose backgrounds and styles of life are unfamiliar to them.



The research reports which will be published with the final recommendations will provide a wealth of material for future thought and study. New information and ways of looking at problems should help to sharpen the focus of Canadian debate on the relations between our cultures; they should give concreteness to matters which have hitherto been discussed in abstraction. Some may indeed contribute to an understanding of how peoples of differing languages and cultures live together and will have significance well beyond Canada. The Commission's research findings will not be just an aid to writing a report and making recommendations. Rather, they constitute an integral part of the Commission's fulfillment of its mandate.

The will  
to carry on

140. But consideration of briefs and research findings will be far from enough.

More than most other countries, Canada is a creation of human will. It has been called a "geographical absurdity", an "appendage of the United States", a "4,000-mile main street" with many bare stretches. Nevertheless this country has existed for a long time, because its people have never stopped willing that there be a Canada.

Each age is fascinated by the difficulties it must face; hence most generations go through periods of doubt. Present day Canada is no exception. But is it more difficult to maintain the entity of Canada today, to make necessary changes, than it was to create it yesterday?

Canada will continue to exist, will grow and progress, will surmount the present crisis, if Canadians have the will—a will like that of the men who built the country.

The present crisis is reminiscent of the situation described by Lord Durham in 1838: "I found two nations warring in the bosom of a single state." The circumstances today are very different; we have not just had a bloody revolt. On the contrary, one of the problems is that a part of the Canadian people does not realize that a gulf has opened, and that we have to rethink our partnership.

The will we speak of cannot be stiff and arbitrary: it must take account of new circumstances. Like anything that is living it must constantly adapt to changing conditions. Above all it must be based on awareness and understanding.

"Negotiations"  
between two  
societies

141. The "negotiations" of which we spoke in the last chapter will be in large part the responsibility of the governments. We conceive them, however, also in a much larger sense. They concern the totality of the two societies in Canada. In our final report we hope, through our findings and recommendations, to make some contribution to the discussions and negotiations that must go on.

ALL OF WHICH WE RESPECTFULLY SUBMIT FOR YOUR  
EXCELLENCY'S CONSIDERATION,



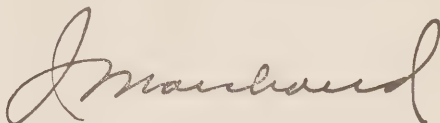
André Laurendeau



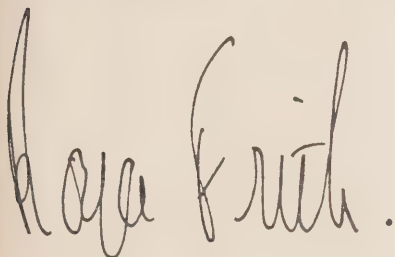
A. Davidson Dunton



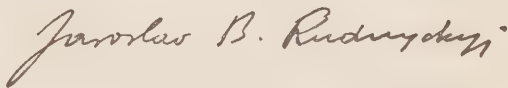
Clément Cormier, c.s.c.



Jean Marchand



Royce Frith



Jaroslav Bohdan Rudnycky



Jean-Louis Gagnon



F. R. Scott



Mrs. Stanley Laing



Paul Wyczynski



Paul Lacoste, Co-Secretary



Neil M. Morrison, Co-Secretary

February 1, 1965.













P.C. 1963-1106

Certified to be a true copy of a Minute of a Meeting of the Committee of the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor General on the 19th July, 1963.

The Committee of the Privy Council, on the recommendation of the Right Honourable L. B. Pearson, the Prime Minister, advise that

André Laurendeau,  
Montreal, P.Q.  
Davidson Dunton,  
Ottawa, Ont.  
Rev. Clément Cormier,  
Moncton, N.B.  
Royce Frith,  
Toronto, Ont.  
Jean-Louis Gagnon,  
Montreal, P.Q.  
Mrs. Stanley Laing,  
Calgary, Alta.  
Jean Marchand,  
Quebec City, P.Q.  
Jaroslav Bohdan Rudnyckyj,  
Winnipeg, Man.  
Frank Scott,  
Montreal, P.Q.  
Paul Wyczynski,  
Ottawa, Ont.

be appointed Commissioners under Part I of the Inquiries Act to inquire into and report upon the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and to recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races, taking into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution; and in particular

1. to report upon the situation and practice of bilingualism within all branches and agencies of the federal administration—including Crown corporations—and in their communications with the public and to make recommendations designed to ensure the bilingual and basically bicultural character of the federal administration;

2. to report on the role of public and private organizations, including the mass communications media, in promoting bilingualism, better cultural relations and a more widespread appreciation of the basically bicultural character of our country and of the subsequent contribution made by the other cultures; and to recommend what should be done to improve that role; and



3. having regard to the fact that constitutional jurisdiction over education is vested in the provinces, to discuss with the provincial governments the opportunities available to Canadians to learn the English and French languages and to recommend what could be done to enable Canadians to become bilingual.

The Committee further advise:

- (a) that the Commissioners be authorized to exercise all the powers conferred upon them by section 11 of the Inquiries Act and be assisted to the fullest extent by Government departments and agencies;
- (b) that the Commissioners adopt such procedures and methods as they may from time to time deem expedient for the proper conduct of the inquiry and sit at such times and at such places as they may decide from time to time;
- (c) that the Commissioners be authorized to engage the services of such counsel, staff and technical advisers as they may require at rates of remuneration and reimbursement to be approved by the Treasury Board;
- (d) that the Commissioners report to the Governor in Council with all reasonable despatch, and file with the Dominion Archivist the papers and records of the Commission as soon as reasonably may be after the conclusion of the inquiry;
- (e) that André Laurendeau and Davidson Dunton be co-Chairmen of the Commission and André Laurendeau be Chief Executive Officer thereof.

R. G. ROBERTSON

Clerk of the Privy Council





1. We considered it might be useful to describe more fully the organization and procedure of the regional meetings. Although each of them had its own individual characteristics and it would take too long to describe every one, we will attempt to draw together some of the common features.

It should be said first of all that the staff assembled by the Commission proved competent, efficient and remarkably dedicated. It included, among others, regional organizers, who were particularly well informed on the areas assigned to them.

All in all, the main tasks of the staff were twofold: first to invite the public to the meetings and secondly to ensure the broadest and most diversified representation possible of all social and cultural backgrounds.

The first task mostly involved publicity, and was relatively easy. But the second posed complicated and delicate problems.

2. In general, this is how matters proceeded. Our staff person would arrive at town X. His first duty was to get in touch with individuals or groups connected with local organizations—joint group committees, associations for adult education and the university extension course divisions. Where no such agency existed he would organize an advisory committee comprising a number of individuals who were known to speak for various sectors of the community. He had to assemble this temporary body from scratch or build it up around one of the more active groups such as a board of trade, or a patriotic association.

The advisory committee performed a number of important duties:

(a) The invitation addressed to the public at large would not have guaranteed a sufficiently representative character to the meetings. Thus it was necessary to make a list of people who should be invited and get in touch with each by telephone or by circular letter. These invitations were distributed not only in the city where the meeting was to be held but throughout the district.

(b) The committee had to recruit chairmen and reporters for the discussion groups. In selecting them they had to consider first their special experience in these duties rather than their general ability or their particular interest in the matters to be discussed.

(c) The committee, in co-operation with our staff people, would decide at what place or places the meetings should be held and, where necessary, put us in touch with the various local authorities.

(d) Finally, the advisory committee had to play another essential role—one that is harder to define—in that it had to help to make the meeting a thoroughly regional event, and with its assistance, to allow the Commission's work to take on a more definite and real meaning in the area.

3. In each new location the Commissioners faced an unknown situation, even though they had available information supplied by the staff, and considerable data concerning the area. They had no way of knowing how many people they would meet, nor what type they would be. Each time they realized the risk they were running and knew how much they would be at the mercy of their audience.

The Commissioners were not there to defend a thesis; on the contrary, once they had explained the purpose of the meeting they were condemned to silence. This was always a



frustrating experience both for the public, who were eager to ask all kinds of questions, and for the Commissioners themselves, who now and then would have liked to put forward an explanation. This feeling of frustration which was entailed by our quasi-legal status, was accentuated all the more by the direct and spontaneous nature of the discussions.

4. As a general rule the five Commissioners arrived at a town during the afternoon preceding the regional meeting.

In the evening there was usually a meeting which included the advisory committee, the chairmen and reporters of the following day's discussion groups, the Commissioners and members of the staff. The voluntary assistants were told what was expected of them, that is, how to follow certain procedures which would ensure full participation in the debates and maximum freedom of expression. When that had been settled, the meeting turned into a discussion group, where everyone was free to voice his opinions regarding the problems to be discussed the following day, when the chairmen and reporters would have to refrain from taking part in the debate which they were conducting or summing up. They then could ask questions about the Commission's terms of reference and methods of procedure. The informal atmosphere encouraged the exchange of personal opinions. Once the meeting was finished individual conversation continued, in which requests for clarification or further explanation of particular points were raised. These preliminary meetings were always extremely fruitful; they served as a barometer to public opinion in the area. When circumstances prevented these meetings from being held, the Commissioners' on the following day, felt rather like tourists arriving in the town.

5. The regional meetings were divided into daytime and evening sessions, the usual timetable being as follows:

The morning session would begin at about 10 o'clock. After the people who were participating had registered, there would then be a brief explanation of the Commission's objectives. One of the joint Chairmen would outline the Commission's terms of reference and answer some of the usual objections (No, the Commission did not want to force every Canadian to speak English or French; it was not an instrument of the French Canadians; nor was it an instrument of Ottawa to anglicize French Canada, etc., etc.). The joint Chairman would repeat (interminably, so that it became terribly monotonous to the Commissioners, the staff and the journalists who followed the Commission from place to place) the following three questions, already referred to in Chapter I, which summarize the central problem as the Commission sees it:

—*Can English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians live together, and do they want to?*

—*Under what new conditions?*

—*And are they prepared to accept those conditions?*

He would also underline the importance to the Commission of the "other cultures".

Thereupon the Chairman of the meeting would move that the morning session should be concerned with the regional aspect of the problem of two languages and cultures and that in the afternoon the same matters should be examined from the standpoint of Canada as a whole. This was the full extent, and was strictly adhered to, of the Commission's intervention in the debates. The meeting would break up at approximately 10.30 a.m.,

following which groups of 10 to 20 people would gather elsewhere along with the discussion chairmen and reporters who had already been chosen.

Each group would draw up a list of the subjects to be dealt with, the members themselves suggesting the topics, and when the agenda had been established the discussion would begin.

6. In several parts of the country we were warned that almost no one would come to the regional meetings: this prophecy was not borne out by experience in any area. It could seem paradoxical, for example, that in the daytime meetings in Victoria and Vancouver, Edmonton and Calgary, Saskatoon and Winnipeg the attendance was considerably larger than in the city of Quebec. The smallest turnout was 70 people, the largest 355; for the most part it ranged between 100 to 200 people. The numbers may not seem imposing; but the Commission had decided previously that it would be preferable if the daytime sessions were fairly unofficial in character. The ideal number of participants had been set at approximately 150. Furthermore, if one takes into account the fact that the meetings were organized in great haste, that they were not based on permanent institutions or associations, that some of them were held in relatively small centres and, above all, that those who attended had to sacrifice a full day's work, the results obtained in most places were quite surprising.

We had also been assured that, at least in English-speaking Canada, the participants would not know what to say and would remain silent—but it was just the opposite that turned out to be true, particularly in the discussion groups.

Needless to say there was a certain amount of hesitation and fumbling at times—occasionally moments of dead silence—but on the whole discussions were full and very lively. We also found that in the group discussions most people joined in the exchange of opinions.

7. The discussions would last a full hour and sometimes longer. There would then be a coffee break, following which the reporters summed up the views put forward in the groups for the benefit of all.

In the afternoons the time was divided in the same way—a short plenary session, the resumption of group discussion and another short general meeting to hear the reports.

In all, two or three hours of group discussion and approximately two hours were spent in plenary session.

8. The evening sessions were the most delicate part of the meetings, for the general public attended in larger numbers (from 150 to 800 people) than in the daytime and the atmosphere was tenser. Whereas the members of the press had undertaken not to report what was said in the discussion groups, so as to allow greater freedom of expression, they were at liberty to report what they heard in the evening, hence there was a constant danger that certain statements might be given an excessive emphasis from one end of the country to the other.

The Commissioners sometimes wondered whether it would not be wise to eliminate the evening sessions, or at least to give them a more private character. However, each time they considered the matter they decided to continue the experiment; firstly, because some of them had already taken place and it would have been difficult to hold sessions in camera in one part of the country when they had been open to the public in others;

secondly, because the Commissioners did not want such an open enterprise to take on the appearance of a clandestine affair, and thirdly, because it seemed to them that it would be healthy if people who rarely have an opportunity to express their opinions in public were enabled to do so.

All in all, although we sometimes felt we were walking over thin ice, the results of the experiment confirmed our views. We met very few hot-heads, fanatics or cranks.

Often indeed a kind of self-censorship worked against the expression of extreme opinions. For instance, at one meeting where a number of people were expressing unfavourable opinions about Quebec the atmosphere suddenly underwent a transformation when a young man, as we have already noted in Chapter 5, said with spirit, "I would like to remind [you] that every time you insult the French Canadians you create thousands more separatists." It was most interesting to see how the meetings developed—one person would take a stand on a certain question, someone else would rise to oppose it; and often speakers would be led into making statements they had obviously not intended to make. The self-censorship of the audience also had another effect, since negative feelings that might seem natural enough to the speaker in the privacy of his home or in a small group soon became objectionable when they were voiced in public—where they were likely to stir up a reaction which brought someone to refute them.

9. We are morally certain that every current of opinion was expressed at most of the meetings. Since then we have not run across a single point of view through the news media that we did not hear expressed more or less in the same way in the regional meetings. We are not as well equipped to evaluate the exact strength of such opinions at the local or national level, but their points of convergence are too numerous to be accidental and we are convinced that they correspond to very widespread opinions, whose significance is very great.

This is the itinerary followed by the "teams" formed by members of the Commission and the joint Secretaries:

City	Attendance*	
	Day	Evening
Sherbrooke—March 18, 1964 .....	355	350
Three Rivers—March 18, 1964 .....	284	300
London—March 25, 1964 .....	158	400
Sudbury—March 25, 1964 .....	198	800
Fredericton—April 10, 1964 .....	100	160
Yarmouth—April 13, 1964 .....	73	175
Sydney—April 13, 1964 .....	70	80
Edmonton—April 24, 1964 .....	200	200
Vancouver—April 27, 1964 .....	180	400
Regina—April 30, 1964 .....	95	400
Windsor—April 30, 1964 .....	210	500
Kingston—May 5, 1964 .....	143	500



City	Attendance*	
	Day	Evening
Moncton—May 12, 1964 .....	175	400
Rimouski—May 12, 1964 .....	104	250
Chicoutimi—May 14, 1964 .....	194	400
Port Arthur—May 26, 1964 .....	91	300
Winnipeg—May 28, 1964 .....	171	500
Victoria—June 5, 1964 .....	157	350
Calgary—June 8, 1964 .....	207	400
St. John's—June 8, 1964 .....	71	150
Saskatoon—June 10, 1964 .....	194	500
Halifax—June 10, 1964 .....	80	156
Quebec—June 16, 1964 .....	120	600

It will be noticed that we did not go to Prince Edward Island though we firmly intended to. Owing to the 1864 centenary celebration, no hall was available in Charlottetown for a meeting of the Commission.

On the other hand, it was felt that it would be impossible to make use in Montreal and in Toronto of the system organized for smaller centres. This obviously did not prevent the Commission from getting in touch with many persons, either individually or in groups. Moreover, it is from these two cities that we have received the greatest number of submissions.

In order to increase the contacts, the Commission was split into two groups: four of its members and one joint Chairman were present at each meeting—except in Vancouver, Winnipeg and Quebec City where all the Commissioners were present, and in Sydney and Yarmouth where three of them were present. In Yarmouth, Dean Scott presided over the meeting.

In addition to the regional meetings, members of the Commission have met with other organizations and public bodies as opportunities arose.

\*The daytime figures are actual registrations although some individuals declined to register. The evening attendance was estimated by the number of chairs set out, or, in the case of smaller meetings, by counting heads.









Ottawa, May 15, 1963

My dear Premier:

In a speech I made in the House of Commons on December 17, 1962, on the problems posed, and the opportunities offered, in Canada by the duality of language and culture established by Confederation, I suggested that a broad and comprehensive inquiry should be conducted, in consultation with the provinces, on bilingualism and biculturalism. That proposal received widespread support in Parliament and, I believe, in the country.

I am now writing to ask whether your government would favour such an inquiry by a Royal Commission with terms of reference such as those annexed to this letter.

Any recommendations from the proposed Commission would, of course, not be binding on governments; nor would approval by your government of such a Commission with these terms of reference imply any commitment to accept any recommendations that it might make.

I would be most grateful for your early consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely,

LESTER B. PEARSON



The Premier  
The Government Of The Province Of Newfoundland  
St. John's

20 May, 1963

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson, P.C., M.P.,  
Prime Minister of Canada,  
Ottawa.

My dear Prime Minister:

I thank you for your letter of May 15, enclosing draft terms of reference of the proposed Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism and asking whether the Government of Newfoundland would approve appointment of a Royal Commission.

In the fourteen years that Newfoundland has been united with Canada our people have come to appreciate the basic importance to the unity of our country, of good relations between the two founding races of Canada. We share a long border with the Province of Quebec and in Labrador are coming into immediate contact with the problems associated with the bilingual and bicultural character of Canada.

The Government of Newfoundland is ready and eager to make a constructive contribution to the solution of these problems; we cordially approve the proposal of a Royal Commission; we are quite happy with the draft of the terms of reference; and we are ready to cooperate fully in the work of the Commission.

Sincerely yours,  
(signed) J. R. SMALLWOOD

Premier's Office  
Saskatchewan

Regina, May 21st, 1963

The Rt. Hon. L. B. Pearson, P.C.,  
Prime Minister of Canada,  
Ottawa, Ontario.

My dear Prime Minister:

This will acknowledge your letter dated May 15th, 1963, regarding a possible Royal Commission inquiry on bilingualism and biculturalism.

As soon as my colleagues and I have had an opportunity to study and discuss the proposed terms of reference I shall write to you again with our detailed comments.

Yours sincerely,  
(signed) W. S. LLOYD

Prime Minister and President of the Council  
Toronto, Ontario,

May 24, 1963

My dear Prime Minister:

I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of May 15th in which you invite our views on the establishment of a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the existing state of "bilingualism and biculturalism" in Canada and to recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races, taking into account the contribution made by other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada.

As a Province whose own history and development, from the days of Champlain, Frontenac and LaSalle, has been profoundly influenced and enriched by the sons and daughters of French Canada, along with leaders and peoples of other lineage of bygone days, Ontario has the largest French-speaking community outside Quebec. It is natural and logical, therefore, that we should react positively to this all-Canadian outlook, and we do so with a good heart.

Please accept, therefore, my assurance on behalf of the Government and the people of Ontario that this course has our very warm approval, and as the terms of reference, as laid down, have been announced in the press, you will be proceeding on such basis. If the Canadian Confederation is to survive and flourish, our partnership must be a true one—in fact, in spirit, and in purpose—and may I say to you that when the proposed Commission is finally established, we shall leave nothing undone to facilitate its work in our Province.

I am fully persuaded that if we approach these unsolved problems with patience, understanding and goodwill, if we learn the necessary lessons from our failures and draw upon the wisdom gained from almost a century of experience, we can in the next four years do much to strengthen and ensure the concept of the Canadian Confederation so that Canada's Centennial will be an occasion of rejoicing and of fulfilment.

With kind personal regards and best wishes,

Sincerely yours,  
(signed) JOHN P. ROBARTS

Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson,  
Prime Minister of Canada,  
House of Commons,  
Ottawa, Ontario.

The Premier  
Nova Scotia  
Halifax

May 24, 1963

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I wish to acknowledge your letter of May 15th with enclosure regarding the proposed Royal Commission concerning bilingualism and biculturalism.

I have now had an opportunity to confer with my colleagues concerning your inquiry.

It is, of course, not possible for the Government of Nova Scotia to determine whether or not a Royal Commission is the best approach to this problem across the nation. That, of course, would be a decision for your government to take. I can assure you, however, that if your government decides to appoint such a Commission the Province of Nova Scotia will offer such a Commission every co-operation.

Yours sincerely,  
(signed) R. L. STANFIELD

The Honourable Lester B. Pearson  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Ottawa, Canada.



The Government of the Province  
of New Brunswick  
The Premier  
Fredericton

May 24th, 1963

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:—

I have carefully reviewed the Terms of Reference of the proposed Royal Commission on bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and find them very comprehensive and quite adequate. Consequently, the Government of New Brunswick endorses the proposal and offers our utmost co-operation.

Yours sincerely,  
(signed) LOUIS J. ROBICHAUD

The Right Honourable L. B. Pearson  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario

(TRANSLATION)

Office of the Prime Minister  
Province of Quebec

Quebec, May 27, 1963

Honourable Lester B. Pearson,  
Prime Minister of Canada,  
Parliament Buildings,  
Ottawa.

Mr. Prime Minister,

I have your letter of May 15 concerning the holding of an inquiry on biculturalism and bilingualism.

I have submitted your letter to my colleagues, together with the terms of reference of the royal commission that would conduct the inquiry.

I am pleased to inform you that the Government of Quebec favours the holding of such an inquiry, in consultation with the provincial governments, as you suggest.

In that respect, we trust that this commission will be made up in accordance with the principle set out in the preamble to the terms of reference, i.e. "an equal partnership between the two founding races of the Canadian Confederation, taking into account the other ethnic groups".

Yours sincerely,  
(signed) JEAN LESAGE

Office of the Premier  
Edmonton

May 28th, 1963

Right Honourable L. B. Pearson,  
Prime Minister of Canada,  
Ottawa, Ontario.

My dear Prime Minister:

My colleagues and I have given careful consideration to your letter of May 15th and to the Terms of Reference for the proposed Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

In response to your request, we wish to advise that, while we are not opposed to such a study being undertaken, unless the Terms of Reference are clarified to make more explicit the objectives which it is hoped to achieve we have serious doubts as to its advisability and practical value.

To amplify, in the matter of biculturalism, if the objective is to encourage citizens of all racial and ethnic origins to make their maximum contribution to the development of one overall Canadian culture embracing the best of all, we feel this would meet with widespread endorsement and support.

If, on the other hand, the objective is to give some form of official recognition to a dual English and French culture, we suggest that this is unrealistic and impracticable and we doubt that it would meet with any widespread public acceptance.

In the matter of bilingualism, if the objective is to encourage Canadian citizens to become fluent in two or more languages, certainly on the part of most Canadians this would be welcomed.

If the purpose is to extend recognition of French as an official language in areas and spheres beyond those in which it was guaranteed official status at the time of Confederation, we feel that it would not meet with general public acceptance and the consequences, in our opinion, would impair rather than strengthen Canadian unity.

We offer these observations for your consideration in arriving at a final decision in the matter proposed in your communication.

Very sincerely yours,  
(signed) E. C. MANNING  
Premier

Premier's Office  
Prince Edward Island

May 28, 1963

Right Honourable L. B. Pearson  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Ottawa, Canada

My dear Prime Minister:

I have your letter of May 15th, regarding an inquiry with the Provinces of Canada on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

I have not had an opportunity of discussing this matter with other members of my Cabinet, so I am not in a position to fully advise of their views regarding the most suitable approach to this important question.

Recognizing, however, that the decision of your Government favors the formation of a commission to conduct the studies indicated, I can assure you that this Province will accept your proposal, on the understanding as expressed in your letter that any commitments or recommendations from this Commission will not be binding on the Government of our Province.

Yours sincerely,  
(signed) W. R. SHAW  
Premier



Province of Manitoba  
Office of the Premier  
Winnipeg

May 31, 1963

My dear Prime Minister:

My colleagues and I have studied with care the proposal outlined in your letter of May 15th to inquire into biculturalism and bilingualism in Canada by means of a Royal Commission.

May I say at once that this question requires full and serious attention by our people and that you may therefore be assured of the full co-operation of the government of Manitoba in the proposed investigation. Indeed I believe that this province may have a unique contribution to make in the search for a wholehearted consensus on national unity and cultural development because of our experience in integrating the contributions of many cultures into Manitoba's basic French-English cultural background.

In expressing agreement with the aim of the proposed Royal Commission I feel bound, however, to raise the question of whether the problem Canada faces today can be dealt with within these limits. The basic issue appears to me to go beyond the purely cultural relationships of Canadians, and may indeed embrace the inter-governmental framework of the nation, including its fiscal aspect. It would seem that this view has already been placed before your government by some at least of my fellow Premiers, including the Prime Minister of Quebec.

I would hope, therefore, that the appointment of the Royal Commission would not delay a more fundamental examination of the question. This examination, I suggest, may best be considered by direct federal-provincial discussions, possibly along the lines of the meeting envisaged by your predecessor in his letter of February 4th last to provincial premiers. Manitoba would indeed be happy to join in the search for co-operative federalism, a phrase which well reflects our own policy of full co-operation in the working of our Confederation.

In regard to the third point in the suggested terms of reference, I would mention that Manitoba has already taken steps to improve and extend the teaching of French in our public schools. While the educational aspect of bilingualism is of first importance, I doubt that this can usefully be separated from its constitutional implications. It is for this reason that I suggest that, as a matter of procedure, while the Royal Commission may seek information from the provinces and make recommendations thereon, the consideration of this subject should be a matter for inter-governmental discussion rather than of discussion between the Royal Commission and provincial governments.

I am taking the liberty of making this letter public as of Monday, the 3rd of June.

Yours sincerely,  
(signed) DUFF ROBLIN

Premier's Office  
Regina, June 7th, 1963  
The Rt. Hon. Lester B. Pearson,  
Office of the Prime Minister,  
Ottawa, Ontario.

My dear Prime Minister:

With further reference to your letter dated May 15, 1963 regarding a possible Royal Commission on bilingualism and biculturalism, I now wish to advise that the Province of Saskatchewan will be pleased to take advantage of any opportunities to discuss with the Commission problems related to biculturalism.

In the meantime my colleagues and I are discussing ways in which we can best make a contribution to the Commission's inquiry and how best to undertake appropriate provincial studies.

Yours sincerely,  
(signed) W. S. LLOYD









Opening Remarks of Mr. André Laurendeau  
Co-Chairman of the Royal Commission on  
Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

Preliminary Hearing—November 7 and 8, 1963

Created by an Order-in-Council of July 19, 1963, while the majority of its members were on vacation or travelling abroad, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was unable to hold its first meeting until September 4. Since then it has met four times, for two or three days on each occasion. The day before yesterday, it moved into its own offices with a staff that is as yet not quite complete. Today it has its first official contact with the general public.

The Commission has recognized from the beginning the fascinating interest inherent in the task that it has been given—and at the same time the complexity and difficulty of this task.

In many respects the Commission resembles all royal commissions: it has the same powers and fulfills the same types of functions. As such it must undertake research projects, hold public hearings and conclude its work with the drafting of a report.

But in other ways this Commission is "*pas comme les autres*"—as an editorialist in *Continuous Learning*, the publication of the Canadian Association for Adult Education emphasized recently. As this fact is derived from the very nature of the terms of reference, we are hence able to emphasize it.

My colleague, Davidson Dunton, will tell you presently that in our opinion the central idea of the terms of reference is that of the equal partnership between the two founding races, an expression that is nearly impossible to translate into French but which has been expressed by "*le principe de l'égalité entre les deux peuples*" *qui ont fondé la Confédération canadienne*. The general and even rather vague character of the objective thus proposed leads to two particular consequences.

First of all, as you will have realized yourselves, the areas of systematic research that are suggested by such terms are large and varied. When public health, taxation or education are examined, though the problems are both serious and delicate, their scope can be defined with comparative ease; whereas in our case it is particularly difficult to establish the boundaries of research. What is culture and how can two cultures exist in equality "taking into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada"?

Certainly this problem does not date from the day before yesterday; and many are the Canadians who have tackled it. But what has been done until now in a scattered fashion, must this time be undertaken collectively and drawn together in a short space of time. This is, in effect, the job that the Canadian government has entrusted to us and to which the majority of the provinces have promised co-operation.

It will therefore be necessary to compile an enormous quantity of facts dealing with economic and social questions as well as political and cultural ones, to examine them in the light of a particular principle, neither neglecting nor confusing any of their important

aspects, to interpret them and to draw practical conclusions. The intellectual effort demanded of all the specialists who will collaborate on the inquiry will be brought to bear on a vast and infinitely varied ground. We know very well that one cannot dream of producing in so short a time quite so overwhelming a piece of work; but we shall try to forget nothing and to cover every essential.

This is then the first result of the terms of reference. But the second is perhaps the more important and the more specific.

The equal partnership, *l'égalité culturelle*: this is not a notion that compels recognition by itself, even in deference to the most profound studies. For such an idea to flourish it must have the voluntary support of the people in a free society. And that is why the discussions between the Commission and the public will have to be continuous, intimate and free. As it is the future that is at stake the participation of young people in the debate becomes essential: we shall listen to their views with additional attention and interest.

Aristotle wrote that friendship is the soul of the city. Today, the social sciences affirm that a nation exists where you find a collective "wish to live" among its members. Basically the two ideas are the same, and give to our task some singularly profound perspectives. Do this friendship and this "collective wish to live" exist between all the national groups in Canada and particularly between the two groups who established Confederation? Is each group ready to accept the conditions of a life that will result in a society that is viable and agreeable?

And who can tell us this, if not the Canadians?

Ten men of goodwill, with the most able assistants, will not know how to arrive at useful conclusions without a permanent and direct contact with informed and lively public opinion.

The following, in summary, are the questions that the terms of reference and the Commission pose to Canadians:

What is a bilingual and bicultural state?

In concrete terms what is implied by the equality of two languages and two cultures and under what conditions can it be achieved? Do Canadians want this equality? Will they accept the conditions without which it cannot be achieved? And what will be the part played by the other cultures?

It appears to us to be absolutely necessary that the problem become one of urgency to Canadians in all provinces, in all social settings and of all ages; and consequently very necessary that they discuss it amongst themselves, and that particularly by the mass media and through meetings at the local level a soul-searching develop, and develop rapidly, on the subject. For it is one that touches every citizen of this country and the conclusions that come out will have repercussions in one way or another on the lives of all of us.

This dialogue could do more harm than good if it turns to violence or indulgence and if it is left to extreme opinion. But if it is positive and frank it will become the breath of life to the Commission. Without it the Commission will dwindle or at the most remain the endeavour of a small group of men. With a dialogue taking place everywhere in Canada, the inquiry will take on its true dimensions and its conclusions will be drawn from the country itself.

A Royal Commission is not an advertising agency. It will not be able to take sides, except in its conclusions. But it has the right to hope, as I am hoping, that an honest and serious debate on the crisis through which we are passing will spread from one end of the country to the other.

A Royal Commission is rarely a patiently concerted effort: suddenly it gets underway, and it is necessary to jump on board or else miss the train altogether. The dialogue and the research will be useful if started at once. We are asking individuals and institutions for a brotherly collaboration: without a questioner how can a dialogue be started? without searchers how can serious research be conducted?

The Canadian government, in setting up the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism clearly indicated its belief that we are in a state of emergency—an emergency that can jeopardize the very existence of Canada. For this reason we know that things must be done quickly, but at the same time truthfully and deeply. These contradictory demands never cease to harass us and we are aware that they will make our lives difficult during the months and years to come. With your help we have the hope of success, and in any case we have the will to devote ourselves to the task.



Statement of the Commission made by Mr. A. Davidson Dunton, Co-Chairman

Preliminary Hearing—November 7 and 8, 1963

1. The general purpose of the Commission as set out in its terms of reference is: “. . . to inquire into and report upon the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and to recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races, taking into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups, to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution”.

2. A chief aim of the Commission will be to determine to what extent an equal partnership exists, and how it may better be realized in Canada.

3. At the same time, the Commission shall also be concerned with the contributions of peoples of other origins to all the activities that make up the pattern of Canadian life.

4. The idea of “equal partnership” may seem new to some people, but it cannot be entirely new, since there is already an official equality of the use of two languages in federal laws and courts throughout Canada, from Newfoundland to British Columbia, and there is also a degree of equality in the right to separate schools in some provinces.

5. On the other hand, it is clear that this concept of “equal partnership” cannot be simple. More Canadians speak English than French so that there cannot be exact equality in magnitude. It is obvious that English will continue to be the dominant language in large parts of the country: French in others. In practical terms we do not conceive “bilingualism” in Canada will mean that all individual Canadians must speak the two main languages: no more that all English-speaking Canadians must talk French or that all French-speaking Canadians must talk English.

6. Implied in the word “biculturalism” is the fact that in Canada there are two main cultures, each related to one of the principal languages, sharing much in common but each with many distinctive attributes. It will be an important part of our task to consider how these two main cultures may both develop vigorously under the concept of “equal partnership”. At the same time, the Commission shall be concerned with the cultural contributions of other groups. The term “biculturalism” in our minds does not carry the thought that the two cultures must be mixed, nor that individuals must necessarily possess both. But we do believe that it must imply an equality of opportunity for the individual as chiefly associated with one or the other of the two main cultures.

7. The Commission will also examine:

(1) the positive aspects of bilingualism and biculturalism, and the creative factors and larger opportunities of self-development which are realizable in the Canadian situation;

(2) the difficulties inherent in bilingualism;

(3) the cultural elements and spheres of interest common to all Canadians.

8. We shall be ready to examine any suggestions, fundamental or detailed, for safeguarding and promoting the development of each of the two main languages, of the two

main cultures, of the contributions of other groups, and of co-operation among Canadians of all backgrounds in activities of common concern and in the general life of the country.

9. There will be many questions before the Commission which we hope individuals and organizations appearing will attempt to answer.

10. The following are a few examples of such questions: in no way do these examples indicate preliminary conclusions on the part of the Commission.

- (a) Does the development of "bilingualism" in Canada mean that all citizens taking part in important country-wide activities should be expected in the future to speak or at least understand the two official languages?
- (b) Should children everywhere in Canada have the opportunity to be taught in either English or French depending on their family background?
- (c) To what extent should teaching of the other official language be made available in all parts of Canada?
- (d) In Quebec the English and French languages are official, in the sense that they are both used in the statutes and debates in the Quebec legislature, and in the proceedings of all the provincial courts. Are you in favour of extending this bilingualism to other provinces?
- (e) Do you believe senior Federal officials should be able to understand and speak both English and French?
- (f) Do you believe that the same rule should apply to any province in which there is a substantial French or English minority?
- (g) Have you experienced language difficulties in any organization or business with which you are associated or with which you deal?
- (h) In what sense can it be said that there are, or that there are not, two distinct "nations" in Canada, to which other ethnic groups have joined themselves; or in what sense is there, or is there not, a single Canadian nation; do you have another concept of Canadian society?
- (i) Does your concept of equal partnership lead you to consider constitutional amendments?
- (j) What are the common denominators which underlie our two cultures, and upon which we might hope to establish some degree of Canadian identity?
- (k) Do you think that Canada should have a federal capital district in which the two main cultures and the two official languages would be equitably represented?
- (l) Do you think the mass media of communication, such as the Canadian Press, the CBC and the National Film Board, could do more to develop in Canada the notion of equal partnership and of our cultural heritage?
- (m) What is the contribution of the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada?
- (n) What measures should be taken to safeguard the contribution of these other ethnic groups (e.g. teaching of their languages in schools)?

*Remark:* In raising some of these questions, the Commission recognizes the fact that constitutional jurisdiction over education is vested in the provinces.

11. We believe that today Canada is facing questions as serious as those faced at the time of Confederation. From the province of Quebec in particular, but also from other

groups and other regions, there is a growing demand for a new look at Confederation and a better understanding of the basic partnership between the two founding peoples as well as the increasing contribution of Canadians of other origins. Some even question the continued existence of Canada as a federal state.

12. Canada's problem is also a world-wide problem. Very few states today are entirely homogeneous: in Asia, Africa and America, and even in the older European nations, the relations between cultures and languages are matters of grave concern and of constitutional importance. If we solve our difficulties we shall make a constructive contribution to world peace.

13. We earnestly hope that all individuals and groups who are concerned about the future of our country will take the opportunity of giving us their views and suggestions. Only if there is a wide response from all segments of the community are we likely to come through this period of transition with a better understanding of Canadian Federalism and a firm faith in the future of Canada.

## Working Paper

(December, 1963)

(For the use of those preparing briefs for the Commission)

### The Mainspring (*l'idée-force*)

1. The mainspring (*l'idée-force*) of the terms of reference, and consequently of the Commission, is the idea of "an equal partnership between the two founding races", (*l'égalité entre les deux peuples*).

It is a question of a dynamic and positive principle to be put into play in concrete situations; equality is an objective to be sought constantly in a confederative regime.

### Two implicit conclusions

2. The very creation of this Commission and its terms of reference imply:
  - that, in the opinion of a great many Canadians, such an equal partnership does not exist;
  - that it is feasible, at least up to a certain point.

### Very general terms

3. The idea of equal partnership has no geographical frontier, nor is it confined to specific sectors. The terms of the opening paragraph of the mandate are as general as possible: they seem to have all aspects of our society in view rather than just federal policy. The two last paragraphs (2 and 3) establish this clearly; introduced by the words "in particular", they define some large areas, but do not in any way restrict the fields to be explored.

We are not even limited by the actual terms of the Canadian constitution: it would thus be quite legitimate to propose certain recommendations that could lead to its amendment.

### Form of the inquiry

4. Our research will therefore be concerned, at least in theory, with every aspect of Canadian society; and in particular with

- (a) the public sector at all levels (federal, provincial, municipal and educational) and in its various forms (balance in the federal system, public administration, political personnel, etc.);



- (b) questions of the economy and of society;
- (c) education, cultural life and communications.

In all of these areas, we are required in the first instance to examine the facts; then to suggest the steps to be taken to promote the "equal partnership"; which assumes a knowledge of the fundamental causes of the present situation. In summary:

- (a) an inquiry into the facts;
- (b) an analysis of the causes;
- (c) a study of the remedies.

## Two constants

- 5. Two questions must stand out during the whole of this huge task:
  - (a) that of the two languages;
  - (b) that of an equal participation of both English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians in the common weal.

## Positive aspects of cultural duality

6. Above all, the terms of reference will require that we examine the difficulties and the handicaps created by the co-existence of two languages and two cultures in Canada. They will also lead us to emphasize the characteristics of these two cultures.

But, on the one hand, duality also has its advantages. From the beginning, we must decide that one of our functions is to explore the positive and creative aspects of the situation.

On the other hand, Canadians do not exist in their "differences" alone: they possess a common heritage, that of western civilization, and they are influenced by North America's gigantic technological progress. These are potent factors for unity.

And finally, it is possible to communicate between cultures, to carry on exchanges, and even to influence each other. We must keep reminding ourselves that a culture should not be a prison.

## Definitions

7. It may be useful to define at the outset some of the key words used in the terms of reference (culture, bilingualism, biculturalism), as well as others that we will necessarily encounter (like nation, race, ethnic group, etc.).

However, as these definitions often imply the adoption of a point of view or lengthy research on related topics, it is likely that it will take us some time to formulate them. Thus, after a concise examination of the sense of these key words, we must resolve to deepen their meaning little by little as the inquiry progresses.



## Basic research

8. It is likely that certain situations or certain principles have a causal effect in all or in several sectors of Canadian life. We must identify them quickly and make them the objects of basic research. For example: the demography of Canada, linguistic patterns, etc.

## The idea of equal partnership

9. Is this going to mean an absolute equality? Except for paragraph (1) which is insistent because it is limited to the federal domain itself, ("to assure the bilingual and basically bicultural character of the federal administration") the terms of the mandate are more modest. Thus, the opening paragraph does not suggest a perfect equality, but rather the emergence of a policy that will permit the development of "the Canadian confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races . . .". The same trend and the same prudence appear again in paragraphs (2 and 3): no doubt because it is a question of human relations in a free country. Consequently, it is necessary for us to search for the conditions in which the two peoples may develop in equality.

We emphasize that this is not the equality of citizens before the law in the usual sense: that equality is something which is written into our statute books and which cannot be tampered with. It is one of the foundations of law and of society.

The principal object of our analysis is something else: it concerns the citizen as he participates in one or the other of the two cultures: it is the equality of the English-speaking person and the French-speaking person as such, whatever their ethnic origin may be.

We must therefore consider concrete situations and study them closely.

## Democracy and cultural equality

10. There is a difficult problem that will certainly confront us: we must ask ourselves how we can possibly reconcile the exigencies of cultural equality and parliamentary democracy in a country where the representatives of the two cultures are not equal in number.

## The country, but not each individual

11. There are some Canadians who hope to achieve an equal grasp of the two languages and the two cultures. But, it can be stated right away that, generally speaking, a bilingual country does not for a moment imply that all individuals in it are bilingual. Perhaps this "bilingualism" may bring us to a point where we accept as normal the existence, on both sides, of large unilingual areas.

By the same token, biculturalism is not a hodge-podge resulting from the mixing of two cultures.

## The "other" cultures

12. There can be several interpretations of the words "bilingualism" and "biculturalism".

But in the terms of reference, in our view, "bilingualism" means the two languages—English and French—and "biculturalism" means two particular cultures—the English one and the French one. However, the "other" groups are also mentioned. (\*) We must therefore define the nature of the relation between these two questions.

Let us first of all read over carefully the passages relating to the "other" cultures. There are two of them:

Opening paragraph—After reaffirming the principle of "equal partnership between the two founding races", the terms of reference continue: "taking into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution".

Paragraph (2)—This concerns the role of institutions: how they promote "bilingualism (i.e. English and French), better cultural relations (between English-speaking and French-speaking people), as well as a more widespread appreciation of the basically bicultural character (i.e. Anglo-French) of our country and of the subsequent contribution made by the other cultures; and to recommend what should be done to improve that role" (i.e. a quadruple role—the fourth part of which concerns the other cultures).

Thus, there is no specific allusion to the "other" cultures in the two paragraphs which deal with the federal administration (1) and education (3). This is rather revealing. It seems that in these two areas it is assumed that Canadians of other backgrounds have opted for one of the two official languages and cultures. Certain people draw from this fact the conclusion that Canada is actually two melting pots.

But the opening paragraph singularly forbids, or in any case limits, this interpretation. We are forced to take into account "the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada" and to seek measures that will permit us to "safeguard that contribution". This idea reappears in paragraph (2)—the one dealing with public and private institutions, but where it is evident that special thought has been given to the "mass communications media": which in particular must assist Canadians in arriving at a better understanding of "the contribution made by the other ethnic groups".

\* To put the problem in its proper perspective, we must keep in mind the respective importance of each of these groups. As languages and cultures are in question here, we believe it necessary to utilize the statistics relating to *mother tongue* and not to ethnic origin. In the 1961 *Census of Canada* (Population, Official Language and Mother Tongue, Catalogue: 92-549), in terms of mother tongue the Canadian population divides as follows:

Total population:	18,238,247	
Mother tongues:		
English	10,660,534	(58%)
French	5,123,151	(28%)
Others	2,454,562	(14%)
"Others" is broken down into several linguistic groups of which the principal ones are (over and above 100,000):		
German	563,713	(3%)
Ukrainian	361,496	(2%)
Italian	339,626	(2%)
Dutch	170,177	(1%)
Indian and Eskimo	166,531	(1%)
Polish	161,720	(1%)
Others	691,299	(4%)

In summary we can say that the mainspring (*l'idée-force*) of the terms of reference is the question of bilingualism and biculturalism (i.e. English and French) adding immediately that this mainspring is working in a situation where there is the fact of multiculturalism—multiculturalism that must not be suppressed as quickly as possible (the proverbial melting pot), but on the contrary, respected and safeguarded despite not being given official recognition.

Without a doubt the real significance of this complex attitude will become more apparent to us as we progress. Let us say, at the risk of repeating ourselves, that at the present stage two extreme positions are rejected:

- that which proposes to forget the other cultures or sees them above all as something to transform;
- that which would see them given official recognition.

### The first Canadians

13. The terms of reference refer to the “subsequent” contribution made by the other cultures. But there is also a prior contribution that all the others followed: that of the first inhabitants of the country, the Eskimos and the Indians. They make up the oldest group, and in comparison, all the English and French-speaking peoples would appear to be New Canadians.

The Commission recognizes clearly that it has a duty to give special attention to the problems of the Eskimo and the Indian in our present world.

### In summary

14. At the moment of initiating studies and a public inquiry into the most diverse areas, it seems necessary to keep close to the meaning and the goal of our proceedings and to establish a fixed point or orientation.

We find this fixed point in the idea of the equal partnership of Canada's two languages and two cultures: it is that which will guide what could otherwise be rather disjointed research, it is the idea to which we must constantly return, and it is also the measuring stick against which we shall be able to decide to undertake or, on the other hand, to discard certain tasks.

But we must do all this remembering the existence of other cultures, the human riches they represent and the necessity of safeguarding them.









This Appendix presents selected information on the Canadian population by ethnic origin, mother tongue, official language, and distribution of bilingual persons. As well, a breakdown of the distribution of unilingual French-speaking persons of French ethnic origin is shown. In several of the tables, certain special areas of Canada have been chosen to show comparisons more clearly.

The source in each case has been the 1961 Census of Canada and particularly Catalogue 92-561, Volume 1, Part 3; "Population: Language by Ethnic Groups", and Catalogue 92-549, Volume 1, Part 2; "Population: Official Language and Mother Tongue".

The definitions used in the Census reports are as follows:

- mother tongue: the language first learned in childhood and still understood;
- official language: refers to the number of persons who reported they were able to speak either one or both the official languages of Canada;
- ethnic group: is traced through the father. The question asked was "To what ethnic or cultural group did you or your ancestor (on the male side) belong on coming to this continent?" The language spoken at that time by the person, or his paternal ancestor was used as an aid in the determination of the person's ethnic group. Special instructions were provided in cases where the language criterion was not applicable;
- census metropolitan areas: These have been established for groups of urban communities that are in close economic, geographic and social relationships. For census purposes in 1961, Canada had seventeen (17) census metropolitan areas.

Province or Territory	Total Population	British Number	%	French Number	%	Other Ethnic Origin <sup>1</sup> Number	%
Canada	18,238,247	7,996,669	43.84	5,540,346	30.37	4,701,232	25.75
Newfoundland	457,853	428,899	93.67	17,171	3.75	11,783	2.57
Prince Edward Island	104,629	83,501	79.80	17,418	16.64	3,710	3.57
Nova Scotia	737,007	525,448	71.29	87,883	11.92	123,676	16.78
New Brunswick	597,936	329,940	55.17	232,127	38.82	35,869	5.99
Quebec	5,259,211	567,057	10.78	4,241,354	80.64	450,800	8.52
Ontario	6,236,092	3,711,536	59.51	647,941	10.39	1,876,615	30.09
Manitoba	921,686	396,445	43.01	83,936	9.10	441,305	47.88
Saskatchewan	925,181	373,482	40.36	59,824	6.46	491,875	53.16
Alberta	1,331,944	601,755	45.17	83,319	6.25	646,870	48.56
British Columbia	1,629,082	966,881	59.35	66,970	4.11	595,231	36.53
Yukon	14,628	6,946	47.48	991	6.77	6,691	45.74
Northwest Territories	22,998	4,779	20.78	1,412	6.13	16,807	73.08

Source: 1961 Census of Canada; Catalogue 92-561, Vol. 1, Part. 3; "Population: Language by Ethnic Groups".

1. Table 1 (b) on the following page provides a breakdown of the other ethnic groups.

Province or Territory	German	Ukrainian	Italian	Jewish	Nether-lands	Scandi-navian	Polish	Indian and Eskimo	Others and not stated	Total
Canada	1,049,599	473,337	450,351	173,344	429,679	386,534	323,517	220,121	1,194,750	4,701,232
Percentage	5.75	2.59	2.46	.95	2.35	2.11	1.77	1.20	6.55	25.75
Newfoundland	1,829	141	246	180	462	1,201	243	1,411	6,070	11,783
Percentage	.39	.03	.18	.03	.10	.26	.05	.30	1.32	2.57
Prince Edward Island	664	66	103	15	1,288	427	82	236	829	3,710
Percentage	.63	.06	.09	.01	1.23	.40	.07	.22	.79	3.57
Nova Scotia	45,441	1,763	3,719	1,672	25,251	5,731	3,106	3,271	33,722	123,676
Percentage	6.16	.23	.50	.22	3.42	.77	.42	.44	4.57	16.78
New Brunswick	7,386	379	1,210	859	7,882	4,901	633	2,921	9,698	35,869
Percentage	1.23	.06	.20	.14	1.31	.81	.10	.48	1.62	5.99
Quebec	39,457	16,588	108,552	74,677	10,442	11,295	30,790	21,343	137,656	450,800
Percentage	.75	.31	.06	1.41	.19	.21	.58	.40	2.61	8.52
Ontario	400,717	127,911	273,864	65,280	191,017	63,653	149,524	48,074	556,575	1,876,615
Percentage	6.42	2.05	4.39	1.04	3.06	1.02	2.39	.77	8.92	30.09
Manitoba	91,846	105,372	6,476	18,898	47,780	37,746	44,371	29,427	59,389	441,305
Percentage	9.96	11.43	.70	2.05	5.18	4.09	4.81	3.19	6.43	47.88
Saskatchewan	158,209	78,851	2,413	2,287	29,325	67,553	28,951	30,630	93,656	491,975
Percentage	17.10	8.52	.26	.24	3.16	7.30	3.12	3.31	10.12	53.16
Alberta	183,314	105,923	15,025	4,353	55,530	95,879	40,539	28,554	117,753	646,870
Percentage	13.76	7.95	1.12	.32	4.16	7.19	3.04	2.14	8.84	48.56
British Columbia	118,926	35,640	38,399	5,113	60,176	96,792	24,870	38,814	176,501	595,231
Percentage	7.30	2.18	2.35	.31	3.69	5.94	1.52	2.38	10.83	36.53
Yukon	1,092	345	200	0	349	773	241	2,207	1,484	6,691
Percentage	7.46	2.35	1.36	0	2.38	5.28	1.64	15.08	10.14	45.74
Northwest Territories	718	358	144	10	177	583	167	13,233	1,417	16,807
Percentage	3.12	1.55	.62	.04	.76	2.53	.72	57.53	6.16	73.08

Source: 1961 Census of Canada; Catalogue 92-561, Vol. I, Part 3, "Population: Language by Ethnic Groups".

Province or Territory	Total Population of Canada	English Number	%	French Number	%	Other <sup>1</sup> Number	%
Canada	18,238,247	10,660,534	58.45	5,123,151	28.09	2,454,562	13.45
Newfoundland	457,853	451,530	98.61	3,150	0.68	3,173	0.69
Prince Edward Island	104,629	95,564	91.33	7,958	7.60	1,107	1.05
Nova Scotia	737,007	680,233	92.29	39,568	5.36	17,206	2.33
New Brunswick	597,936	378,633	63.32	210,530	35.20	8,773	1.46
Quebec	5,259,211	697,402	13.26	4,269,689	81.18	292,120	5.55
Ontario	6,236,092	4,834,623	77.52	425,302	6.82	976,167	15.65
Manitoba	921,686	584,526	63.41	60,899	6.60	276,261	29.97
Saskatchewan	925,181	638,156	68.97	36,163	3.90	250,862	27.11
Alberta	1,331,944	962,319	72.24	42,276	3.17	327,349	24.57
British Columbia	1,629,082	1,318,498	80.93	26,179	1.60	284,405	17.45
Yukon	14,628	10,869	74.30	443	3.02	3,316	22.66
Northwest Territories	22,998	8,181	35.58	994	4.32	13,823	60.10

Source: 1961 Census of Canada; Catalogue 92-549 Vol. I, Part 2; "Population: Official Language and Mother Tongue".

1. Table 2(b) on the following page provides a breakdown of the other languages.



Province or Territory	German	Italian	Jewish	Indian and Eskimo	Nether-lands	Ukrai-nian	Scandi-navian	Polish	Others and not stated	Total
Canada	563,713 3.09	339,626 1.86	82,448 0.45	166,531 0.91	170,177 0.93	361,496 1.98	116,714 0.63	161,720 0.88	492,137 2.69	2,454,562 13.45
Newfoundland	616	131	69	1,176	173	158	156	125	569	3,173
Percentage	0.13	0.02	0.01	0.25	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.12	0.69
Prince Edward Island	126	43	21	111	401	92	74	46	193	1,107
Percentage	0.12	0.04	0.02	0.10	0.38	0.08	0.07	0.04	0.18	1.05
Nova Scotia	1,523	1,119	488	2,335	2,441	941	827	1,053	6,479	17,206
Percentage	0.20	0.15	0.06	0.31	0.33	0.12	0.11	0.14	0.87	2.33
New Brunswick	1,162	547	378	2,572	1,063	414	979	310	1,348	8,773
Percentage	0.19	0.09	0.06	0.43	0.17	0.06	0.16	0.05	0.22	1.46
Quebec	31,589	89,806	35,845	16,518	6,059	13,424	3,477	19,827	75,575	292,120
Percentage	0.60	1.70	0.68	0.31	0.11	0.25	0.06	0.37	1.43	5.55
Ontario	183,789	207,937	32,452	26,754	90,051	89,766	20,931	83,214	241,273	976,167
Percentage	2.94	3.33	0.52	0.42	1.44	1.43	0.33	1.31	3.86	15.65
Manitoba	83,994	4,362	9,057	27,571	13,363	85,173	12,631	20,652	19,458	276,261
Percentage	9.11	0.47	0.98	2.99	1.44	9.24	1.37	2.24	2.11	29.97
Saskatchewan	89,650	1,369	898	25,932	8,054	67,087	19,511	10,585	27,776	250,862
Percentage	9.68	0.14	0.09	2.80	0.87	7.25	2.10	1.14	3.00	27.11
Alberta	97,666	9,881	1,764	27,928	24,640	83,923	25,603	16,755	39,189	327,349
Percentage	7.33	0.74	0.13	2.09	1.84	6.30	1.92	1.25	2.94	24.57
British Columbia	72,473	24,168	1,459	21,894	23,793	20,101	32,079	8,978	79,460	284,405
Percentage	4.44	1.48	0.08	1.34	1.46	1.23	1.96	0.55	4.87	17.45
Yukon	640	144	2	1,348	95	202	281	84	520	3,316
Percentage	4.37	0.98	0.01	9.21	0.64	1.38	1.92	0.57	3.55	22.66
Northwest Territories	485	119	15	12,392	44	215	165	91	297	13,823
Percentage	2.10	0.51	0.06	53.88	0.19	0.93	0.71	0.39	1.29	60.10

Source: 1961 Census of Canada; Catalogue 92-549 Vol. I, Part 2; "Population: Official Language and Mother Tongue".

Province or Territory	Total Population	Speaking English Only Number	Speaking English %	Speaking French Only Number	Speaking French %	Speaking English and French Number	Speaking English %	Speaking Neither English nor French Number	Speaking Neither %
Canada	18,238,247	12,284,762	67.35	3,489,866	19.13	2,231,172	12.23	232,447	1.27
Newfoundland	457,853	450,945	98.49	522	0.11	5,299	1.15	1,087	0.23
Prince Edward Island	104,629	95,296	91.07	1,219	1.16	7,938	7.58	176	0.16
Nova Scotia	737,007	684,805	92.91	5,938	0.80	44,987	6.10	1,277	0.17
New Brunswick	597,936	370,922	62.03	112,054	18.74	113,495	18.98	1,465	0.24
Quebec	5,259,211	608,635	11.57	3,254,850	61.88	1,338,878	25.45	56,848	1.08
Montreal Metropolitan Area	2,109,509	462,260	21.91	826,333	39.17	776,603	36.81	44,313	2.10
Quebec Excluding Montreal Metropolitan Area	3,149,702	146,375	4.64	2,428,517	77.10	562,275	17.85	12,535	0.39
Ontario	6,236,092	5,548,766	88.97	95,236	1.52	493,270	7.90	98,820	1.58
Manitoba	921,686	825,955	89.61	7,954	0.86	68,368	7.41	19,409	2.10
Saskatchewan	925,181	865,821	93.58	3,853	0.41	42,074	4.54	13,433	1.45
Alberta	1,331,944	1,253,824	94.13	5,534	0.41	56,920	4.27	15,666	1.17
British Columbia	1,629,082	1,552,560	95.30	2,559	0.15	57,504	3.52	16,459	1.01
Yukon	14,628	13,679	93.51	38	0.25	825	5.63	86	0.58
Northwest Territories	22,998	13,554	58.93	109	0.47	1,614	7.01	7,721	33.57

Source: 1961 Census of Canada; Catalogue 92-561, Vol. I, Part 3; "Population: Language by Ethnic Groups".

Province or Territory	British Ethnic Origin		French Ethnic Origin		Other Ethnic Origin	
	Total	Number	Total	Number	Total	Number
Canada	7,996,669	318,463	5,540,346	1,665,979	4,701,232	246,730
Quebec	567,057	162,907	4,241,354	1,036,478	450,800	139,493
Montreal Metropolitan Area	377,625	101,767	1,353,480	554,929	378,404	119,907
Excluding Montreal Metropolitan Area	189,432	61,140	2,887,874	481,549	72,396	19,586
Ontario	3,711,536	91,665	647,941	338,453	1,876,615	63,152
New Brunswick	329,940	12,096	232,127	99,158	35,869	2,241

Source: 1961 Census of Canada: Catalogue 92-561, Vol. I, Part 3; "Population: Language by Ethnic Groups".

Province or Territory	Total Population	French Ethnic Origin		Percentage Speaking French Only
		Total	Number Speaking French Only	
Canada	18,238,247	5,540,346	3,390,704	61.20
Newfoundland	457,853	17,171	268	1.56
Prince Edward Island	104,629	17,418	1,178	6.76
Nova Scotia	737,007	87,883	5,596	6.36
New Brunswick	597,936	232,127	109,282	47.07
Quebec	5,259,211	4,241,354	3,168,046	74.69
Montreal Metropolitan Area	2,109,509	1,353,480	777,932	57.47
Quebec excluding Montreal Metropolitan Area	3,149,702	2,887,874	2,390,114	82.76
Ontario	6,236,092	647,941	89,074	13.74
Manitoba	921,686	83,936	7,221	8.60
Saskatchewan	925,181	59,824	3,256	5.44
Alberta	1,331,944	83,319	4,854	5.82
British Columbia	1,629,082	66,970	1,835	2.74
Yukon	14,628	991	33	3.32
Northwest Territories	22,998	1,412	61	4.32

Source: 1961 Census of Canada: Catalogue 92-561, Vol. I, Part 3; "Population; Language by Ethnic Groups".

Province or Territory	Total Population of French Ethnic Origin	Mother Tongue		French		Other	
		English Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Canada	5,540,346	552,739	9.97	4,965,579	89.62	22,028	0.39
Canada excluding Quebec	1,298,992	484,400	37.29	800,699	61.64	13,893	1.06
Ontario	647,941	244,566	37.74	397,728	61.38	5,647	0.87
New Brunswick	232,127	28,226	12.15	203,258	87.56	643	0.27
Nova Scotia	87,883	50,049	56.94	37,621	42.80	213	0.24
Manitoba	83,936	25,451	30.32	56,433	67.23	2,052	2.44
Alberta	83,319	41,488	49.79	38,978	46.78	2,853	3.42
British Columbia	66,970	43,393	64.79	22,592	33.73	985	1.47
Saskatchewan	59,824	25,860	43.22	32,611	54.51	1,353	2.26
Prince Edward Island	17,418	9,612	55.18	7,744	44.46	62	0.35
Newfoundland	17,171	14,634	85.22	2,522	14.68	15	0.08

Source: 1961 Census of Canada: Catalogue 92-561, Vol. I, Part 3; "Population: Language by Ethnic Groups".



Province or Territory	Total Population of French Ethnic Origin	Official Language		French Only		English & French		Neither English Nor French	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Canada	5,540,346	475,128	8.57	3,390,704	61.20	1,665,979	30.06	8,535	0.15
Canada excluding Quebec	1,298,992	442,251	34.04	222,658	17.14	629,501	48.46	4,582	0.35
Ontario	647,941	217,751	33.60	89,074	13.74	338,453	52.23	2,663	0.41
New Brunswick	232,127	23,239	10.01	109,282	47.07	99,158	42.71	448	0.19
Nova Scotia	87,883	46,229	52.60	5,596	6.36	35,904	40.85	154	0.17
Manitoba	83,936	24,425	29.09	7,221	8.60	51,860	61.78	430	0.51
Alberta	83,319	40,702	48.85	4,854	5.82	37,398	44.88	365	0.43
British Columbia	66,970	41,096	61.36	1,835	2.74	23,863	35.63	176	0.26
Saskatchewan	59,824	24,692	41.27	3,256	5.43	31,062	52.82	274	0.45
Prince Edward Island	17,418	9,040	51.90	1,178	6.76	7,143	41.00	57	0.32
Newfoundland	17,171	14,024	81.67	268	1.56	2,876	16.74	3	0.01

Source: 1961 Census of Canada: Catalogue 92-561, Vol. I, Part 3; "Population: Language by Ethnic Groups".





## Quotations originally spoken in French and translated in the text of the Report

## Chapter 1

1. 'Dans notre région, non seulement le mandat de la Commission étonne, mais il demeure indéchiffrable à une vaste partie de la population, y compris à de nombreuses élites qui normalement devraient participer à la rédaction de mémoires'.  
page 25
2. 'Voilà trente ou cinquante ans, sinon un siècle, que nous formulons nos réclamations, et ça n'a jamais rien donné: pourquoi les reformuler de nouveau aujourd'hui?'  
page 28
3. 'Comment arrivez-vous à vous y retrouver?'  
page 31

## Chapter 2

4. 'On parle trop l'anglais dans la région de Sherbrooke, et il est difficile au Canadien français de faire sa vie sans savoir l'anglais'.  
(Sherbrooke) page 38
5. «. . . ne désirent pas apprendre le français».  
(Sherbrooke) page 38
6. «Les Canadiens anglais ne font aucun effort pour apprendre le français; certains anglophones demeurent cinquante ans à Trois-Rivières sans apprendre un mot de français. En outre ils se croient culturellement supérieurs; ils détiennent localement 75 pour cent des capitaux, les patrons anglophones ne favorisent pas l'accès des Canadiens français aux postes de direction—non par mauvaise volonté, mais parce qu'ils oublient jusqu'à l'existence des Canadiens français, qui pourtant les submergent».  
(Trois-Rivières) page 38
7. 'Tout le système', diront certains, 'est anglais, et c'est pourquoi nos anglophones n'éprouvent pas la nécessité du français, et campent chez nous comme une armée impériale dans une colonie'.  
page 38
8. Nos hôtes 'savaient qu'ils recevaient des Canadiens français. Partout, ils se sont arrangés pour que quelqu'un nous parle français. Ainsi, partout, il nous a été possible de nous faire comprendre en français—partout, sauf à l'Ambassade du Canada'.  
page 39
9. 'Comment peuvent-elles être aussi mal traitées, alors que nous sommes si généreux envers la nôtre [l'anglaise], généreux au point de nous laisser angliciser par elle?'  
page 39

## Chapter 3

10. «Le Québec, pour sa part, veut qu'on donne aux minorités françaises des autres parties du Canada ce que lui-même il accorde à la minorité anglaise chez lui». (Rimouski) page 46
11. «... Les faits et le texte de l'article 133 de la Constitution établissent bien que c'est absolument faux et que le Québec est la seule province où le français est la langue officielle». (Québec) page 47
12. «Comment prétendez-vous ... avec une question de bilinguisme établir la bonne entente au Canada, si on n'accepte même pas au départ l'existence d'une nation canadienne-française?» (Sherbrooke) page 47
13. 'Savez-vous, messieurs, que le français est parlé sans interruption à Québec depuis 1608?' page 55
14. «Nous sommes là pour enrichir les Anglais ...» (Chicoutimi) page 55
15. «... nos amis les Anglais». (Rimouski) page 55
16. «Maintenant vous pouvez me demander: dans quelle mesure l'anglais est-il nécessaire? Il ne faut pas oublier que nous vivons dans un contexte de 200 millions d'Anglais. Il serait utopique de penser que les habitants de la région du Saguenay ou de la province de Québec puissent se confiner à leur langue maternelle, puisqu'ils se trouvent sur le continent nord-américain». (Chicoutimi) page 57
17. «... ce n'est pas parce que nous avons des Anglais dans la Confédération que nous sommes obligés de parler anglais, c'est parce que nous avons les voisins du sud, les États-Unis». (Rimouski) page 58
18. '... Comme un long navire qui fait eau de toutes parts et coule si imperceptiblement qu'à peu près personne ne veut s'en rendre compte'. page 59

## Chapter 4

19. «Pour avoir une culture [je parle surtout de la minorité française de l'Ontario], pour être français, ça suppose un milieu français, ça suppose des institutions françaises, ça suppose qu'on puisse vivre français». (Sudbury) page 63



20. «Ces gens se sont rendus compte que la culture française, c'est plus que de parler le français de tous les jours . . . c'est aussi une forme, peut-être, de penser».  
(Sherbrooke) page 63
21. «. . . il faut s'organiser pour donner aux deux cultures des moyens égaux de diffusion, la représentation égale dans les institutions qui sont les grands emblèmes d'une culture».  
(Chicoutimi) page 63
22. «Il ne faut pas oublier que le premier symbole d'un groupe ethnique c'est d'abord sa langue. Personnellement, je pense que l'enseignement de l'anglais ne devrait pas exister au primaire, ni au secondaire, mais bien à la fin du secondaire. D'abord apprenons notre langue, ensuite nous apprendrons l'anglais».  
(Chicoutimi) page 65
23. «. . . qu'on puisse établir le bilinguisme à l'aide d'un plan scolaire».  
(Chicoutimi) page 65
24. «Aussitôt qu'un enfant commence à apprendre, on lui pompe l'anglais dans la tête».  
(Chicoutimi) page 65
25. «Nous demandons des systèmes complets d'éducation. Ce qui implique des écoles primaires, des écoles secondaires et des écoles universitaires françaises».  
(Sudbury) page 65
26. «[En Ontario], on peut faire ses études françaises au niveau primaire, mais dès qu'on arrive au niveau secondaire, ce droit nous est refusé. Nous sommes obligés d'aller à une école privée, payer \$500 par année. Mais si nous voulons aller dans une école secondaire de l'État, nous devons faire tous nos cours en anglais, sauf nos cours de français. Or à l'université . . . nous avons une autre option . . . [celle] de prendre nos cours, soit en français, soit en anglais. Mais ce qui se produit, c'est que les gens sont handicapés; c'est que nous devenons des étudiants de deuxième classe . . .»  
(Sudbury) page 66
27. ' . . . ils réclament des professeurs de langue française . . . et ils s'imaginent que nous allons leur en fournir, alors que par ailleurs ils nous empêchent d'en former en nous refusant des écoles normales françaises'.  
page 66
28. 'Vous devez comprendre, . . . que la condition actuelle des Acadiens est dramatique. Et le drame, pour nous, consiste précisément dans le fait que nous n'avons plus de langue. Nous perdons le français sans pour autant acquérir l'anglais. Au lieu de nous proposer de fréquenter des écoles bilingues, permettez-nous d'améliorer d'abord la qualité de nos écoles françaises. Laissez-nous le temps d'apprendre notre langue

et d'assimiler notre culture. Nous vivons dans un milieu imprégné d'anglais. Si nous n'avons pas un refuge où nous ayons la garantie d'une protection pour notre langue maternelle, celle-ci disparaîtra. Soyez sans crainte . . . l'anglais, nous saurons le parler'.

page 67

29. «Dans un milieu où on ne parle que le français l'enfant n'a aucune motivation pour apprendre l'autre langue».

(Rimouski)

page 68

30. 'On n'a pas abordé la question capitale: on n'a pas parlé des différences religieuses'.

page 69

31. 'Nous, dans le Québec, nous avons laissé les protestants s'organiser comme ils l'entendent; mais nulle part ils accordent les mêmes libertés aux catholiques'.

page 70

32. «Pour nous, ça serait presque une pierre de base...nos propres enfants sont hésitants devant le problème d'apprendre leur propre langue parce qu'ils n'entendent jamais les grands moyens de communication en français».

(Vancouver)

page 72

33. «Je veux premièrement qu'on respecte ma langue dans les endroits publics, surtout dans les endroits fédéraux. Je suis un Canadien français, j'ai droit à ma langue et je veux la parler où il me semblera bon de l'utiliser dans tout le Canada et à tout ce qui appartient à Ottawa, et je demande ce respect-là».

(Sudbury)

page 74

34. «Je crois cependant que le français devrait être rendu officiel dans toutes les provinces du Canada, si on veut sauvegarder le caractère biculturel du pays, car, en fait, il existe dans toutes les provinces des minorités canadiennes-françaises qui ont droit à notre respect, qui ont droit à notre protection. Or si ces minorités ne peuvent pas s'exprimer clairement dans leur parlement, c'est donc qu'il existe chez elles un semblant d'esclavage, je dirais non pas celui-là qu'on connaît, avec des chaînes, mais un esclavage culturel».

(Rimouski)

page 74

35. «...qu'obligatoirement, dans tous les services publics fédéraux transcanadiens, et même internationaux, par exemple, les lignes aériennes sous pavillon canadien, les employés, les membres d'équipage qui ont affaire au public, parlent les deux langues, et en particulier sur les trains du Canadien-National. . .»

(Rimouski)

page 74

36. '... livrent les Canadiens français à l'unilinguisme anglais'.

page 75

37. «... des institutions presque exclusivement anglophones». page 75
38. '...de puissants agents d'anglicisation progressive aussi bien pour la famille du militaire que pour le militaire lui-même'. page 75
39. '...des sociétés militaires anglaises'. page 75
40. «...qu'il n'existe pas de possibilité en dehors de la province de Québec pour un membre de l'Aviation royale du Canada de faire instruire ses enfants dans la langue maternelle». (Rimouski) page 75
41. «deviennent de petits Anglais». (London) page 75
42. «... Je crois que l'on s'en vient dans un monde de plus en plus technique où on ne peut pas éviter d'apprendre l'anglais». (Rimouski) page 76
43. «Je suis d'opinion que même si légalement la province de Québec était unilingue, il serait nécessaire d'apprendre l'anglais pour ceux qui veulent monter ou réussir dans la vie... parce que les affaires, dans le continent nord-américain, se traitent surtout en anglais». (Rimouski) page 77
44. «Si j'arrive pour travailler comme technicien au *Bell Telephone* et que je veux atteindre les hautes sphères, alors il faut que je parle anglais parce que les instruments électroniques et électriques viennent des États-Unis». (Chicoutimi) page 77
45. «De deux personnes... qui ont le même degré d'instruction, ici dans toutes nos usines du Québec, celle de langue anglaise n'a pas besoin d'apprendre une seconde langue pour gagner sa vie, tandis que l'autre doit passer des heures, des années même pour contrôler la deuxième langue... La première personne peut se développer dans le domaine technique et prendre la première promotion tandis que l'autre s'attarde à apprendre une deuxième langue». (Chicoutimi) page 77
46. «Tout le monde sait que dans cette population [Chicoutimi] à 98 pour cent canadienne-française, la grosse industrie se sert, comme langue de travail, de l'anglais et tous ceux qui veulent monter dans l'échelle de l'usine doivent employer l'anglais». (Chicoutimi) page 77

47. «... il existe une grande injustice envers les Canadiens français pour gagner leur vie. Il faudra corriger cette injustice, il faudra que la langue de travail soit la langue majoritaire des ouvriers dans une usine et à ceci il faudrait dire peut-être que pour les ouvriers du Québec, la langue de travail soit la langue française».  
(Chicoutimi) page 78
48. «Dans tous les pays du monde... où une nation a pris possession de son avenir et de sa vie nationale, politique, économique, c'est dans la langue de cette nation-là que toutes les activités industrielles et commerciales se font à l'intérieur du pays... je ne crois pas que le Canadien français soit un être inférieur...»  
(Chicoutimi) page 78
49. «Je n'en veux pas aux Anglais... mais bien au système qui nous rend esclaves».  
(Chicoutimi) page 78
50. «C'est le capitalisme anglais qui est en faute».  
(Sherbrooke) page 78
51. «Nous sommes là pour enrichir les Anglais».  
(Chicoutimi) page 78
52. «... la domination des Anglais sur les Français».  
(Sherbrooke) page 78
53. «On a bâti Shipshaw en Anglais, mais l'Hydro vient de bâtir la Manicouagan en français».  
(Chicoutimi) page 79
54. «Heureusement, par l'Hydro, nous devenons vendeurs, nous pouvons nous imposer!»  
(Chicoutimi) page 79
55. «En dépit des progrès accomplis grâce aux efforts de l'élite acadienne, beaucoup de jeunes n'ont aucune fierté de la langue française... préfèrent parler l'anglais n'importe quand... et considèrent le fait d'être français comme un désavantage».  
(Moncton) page 81
56. 'Autrefois il y avait un complexe de supériorité au Canada: celui des Anglais. Aujourd'hui, il y en a deux: celui des Anglais et celui des Canadiens français du Québec'.  
page 81
57. «Il est vrai qu'il existe ici au Nouveau-Brunswick une bonne entente. J'aimerais mieux qu'elle n'existe pas parce que cette bonne entente est un peu trop la bonne entente qui existe entre un maître et un serviteur. Le prix de cette bonne entente a été la docilité



du peuple acadien. Je crois que cette docilité a assez duré . . . Il y a un problème très aigu et je crois que la situation va exploser».

(Moncton)

page 82

58. «Dans nos revendications pour la réforme de la constitution, est-ce qu'il ne serait pas important de nous demander, nous les Canadiens français du Québec, quels sacrifices nous sommes prêts à faire pour ces minorités françaises des autres provinces?»

(Sherbrooke)

page 82

59. «. . . notre influence sera meilleure et nous pourrons davantage aider les autres minorités».

(Sherbrooke)

page 82

60. ' . . . chaque groupe pourra assurer la survivance de sa minorité chez l'autre'.

page 82

61. «. . . accepter le sort qu'elles ont elles-mêmes choisi . . . et s'intégrer à la majorité comme les Canadiens anglais ici devraient normalement accepter de s'intégrer dans une certaine mesure à la majorité canadienne-française».

(Québec)

page 82

62. «Si j'avais un conseil à donner, ce serait que les minorités de l'Ouest, des Maritimes et de l'Ontario soient traitées comme on a traité les minorités anglaises dans la province de Québec depuis la Confédération».

(Chicoutimi)

page 83

63. «Ça va bien? Eh oui! comme dans une famille où le gendre ne voit jamais sa belle-mère».

(Chicoutimi)

page 83

64. «. . . militaires de Bagotville qui sont aussi étrangers à la région que s'ils étaient des Russes».

(Chicoutimi)

page 84

65. «Moi, j'ai appris à penser en français, j'ai appris à administrer en français, j'ai appris à dessiner en français; j'entre dans une usine et on me dit: 'Monsieur, parlez-vous l'anglais?' Autrement dit, j'ai tout appris en français et je suis obligé de gagner ma vie en anglais».

(Chicoutimi)

page 84

66. «Je suis encore étudiant et je peux vous dire que les bouquins de comptabilité sont encore en anglais, alors nous sommes formés en anglais . . . Alors, je pense que c'est toute une génération qu'il faut instruire en français en lui apprenant à penser en français et surtout en lui montrant les termes techniques qu'il faudrait savoir».

(Chicoutimi)

page 85



67. «Je crois que du point de vue du bilinguisme, il n'y a que les Canadiens français qui sont bilingues».  
(Chicoutimi) page 85
68. «Je recommande pour la nation anglo-canadienne l'unilinguisme anglais comme gage de son homogénéité culturelle et linguistique; je recommande l'unilinguisme français pour la nation québécoise comme gage de survie nationale . . .»  
(Québec) page 86
- Chapter 5
69. «... On ne reproche absolument rien aux Canadiens anglais; ils ont agi comme toutes les majorités agissent. Ce que nous désirons, c'est beaucoup plus simple que ça. Nous désirons tous les pouvoirs fiscaux pour mettre en application ces pouvoirs politiques, afin de nous permettre d'organiser nos institutions et atteindre, en définitive, l'épanouissement complet de la nation canadienne-française. . . Si la Commission en venait à la conclusion qu'en fait la cohabitation est impossible ou non désirée par les deux nations, elle pourrait faire comme nous, les avocats, nous faisons quand nous sommes dans de pareilles situations: nous recommandons aux époux qui ne peuvent s'entendre entre eux de s'éloigner quelque peu, de s'organiser chacun chez eux . . .»  
(Québec) page 92
70. «... vous direz à ces messieurs d'Ottawa que la nouvelle génération du Québec n'est plus influencée par les deux heures de la bataille des Plaines d'Abraham . . . ce qui intéresse et ce qui donne une grande dignité à la jeunesse canadienne-française présentement c'est qu'elle prend l'essor nécessaire pour être capable de se conduire seule . . . l'avenir du Canada français n'est pas dans la Confédération, mais dans l'indépendance du Québec!»  
(Chicoutimi) page 94
71. «... Nos droits, que la Confédération nous a refusés lorsque nous étions 60 pour cent (en 1867), pensez-vous qu'ils nous les redonneront en 1971 lorsque, d'après les statistiques, nous serons seulement 18 pour cent?»  
(Chicoutimi) page 98
72. «... Quand on parle d'égalité, les Canadiens anglais parlent d'égalité des droits civiques individuels, c'est-à-dire des personnes prises individuellement, tandis que nous, Canadiens français, quand nous parlons d'égalité, nous ne parlons pas du tout de droits civiques, nous parlons de droits nationaux de la collectivité, de la nation canadienne-française comme pouvant s'épanouir suivant ses caractéristiques propres . . .»  
(Québec) page 99
73. «... Pour pouvoir vivre toujours en français, il faut être un certain nombre, c'est-à-dire qu'il faut une majorité».  
(Sherbrooke) page 100

74. '... les anglais ... s'en aller dans l'Ouest'.  
page 100
75. «... devra admettre, sur un pied d'égalité, les deux piliers de la nation canadienne basés sur la culture d'expression anglaise et la culture d'expression française».  
(Rimouski) page 102

## Chapter 6

76. «... chez un peuple où l'on marchait un peu courbé, deux cent mille, cinq cent mille individus ont tout à coup décidé de se redresser? ... De braves gens, formés à la docilité, ont cessé de regarder l'obéissance et la pauvreté comme une vocation nationale?»  
(Montréal) page 110
77. «... Nous avons en ce moment des héros littéraires écrasés. C'est parce que nous sommes une société de gens écrasés, nous ne sommes pas encore une nation épanouie».  
(Chicoutimi) page 111
78. «N'oubliez pas ... qu'il y aurait ici crise sociale même si tous les patrons étaient des Canadiens français».  
(Québec) page 115



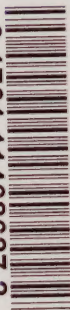






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